LE PETIT NORD

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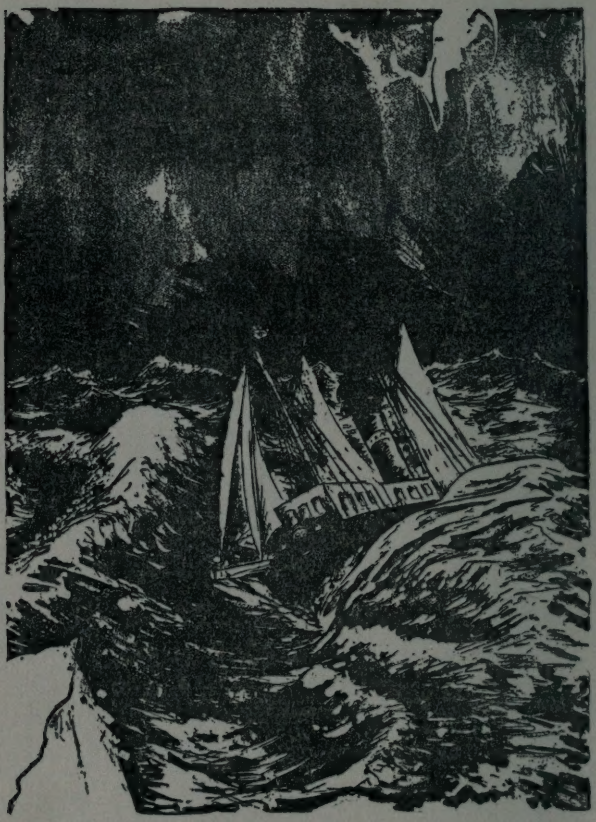
OR
ANNALS OF A LABRADOR HARBOUR



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OR

ANNALS OF A LABRADOR HARBOUR

BY

ANNE Lady GRENFELL AND KATIE SPALDING

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FOREWORD

A FRIEND from the Hub of the Universe, in a somewhat supercilious manner, not long ago informed one of our local friends that his own home was hundreds of miles to the southward. "'Deed, sir, how does you manage to live so far off?" with a scarcely perceptible twinkle of one eye, was the answer.

If home is the spot on earth where one spends the larger part of one's prime, and where one's family comes into being, then for over a quarter of a century "Le Petit Nord" of this book has been my home. With the authors I share for it and its people the love which alone keeps us here. Necessity has compelled me to perform, however imperfectly, functions usually distributed amongst many and varied professions, and the resultant intimacy has become unusual. As, therefore, I read the amusing experiences herein

narrated, I feel that the "other half," who know us not, will love us better even if we are not exactly as they. That is not our fault. They should not live "so far off."

The incidents told are all actual, but the name of every single person and place has been changed to afford any hypersensitive among the actors the protection which pseudonymity confers. We here who have been permitted a glimpse of these pages feel that we really owe the authors another debt beyond the love for the people to which they have testified by the more substantial offering of long and voluntary personal service.

WILFRED T. GRENFELL, M.D.

Labrador, 1919

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From drawings by Dr. Grenfell

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Off the Narrows, St. John's
June 10

DEAR JOAN

The Far North calls and I am on my way: —
There lies the port; the vessel puffs her sail.
There gloom the dark broad seas.
. . . . . .
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks.

Why write as if I had taken a lifelong vow of separation from the British Isles and all things civilized, when after all it is only one short year out of my allotted span of life that I have promised to Mission work? Your steamer letter, with its Machiavellian arguments for returning immediately and directly from St. John's, was duly received. Of my unfitness for the work there is no possible doubt, no shadow of doubt whatever,

and therein you and I are at one. But you will do me the justice to admit that I put very forcibly before those in charge of the Mission the delusion under which they were labouring; the responsibility now lies with them, and I "go to prove my soul." What awaits me I know not, but except when the mighty billows rocked me, not soothingly with gentle motion, but harshly and immoderately, I have never wavered in my decision; and even at such times it was to the bottom of Father Neptune that I aspired to travel rather than to the shores of "Merrie England."

The voyage so far has been uneventful, and we are now swaying luxuriously at anchor in a dense fog. This I believe is the usual welcome accorded to travellers to the island of Newfoundland. There is no chart for icebergs, and "growlers" are formidable opponents to encounter at any time. Therefore it behoves us to possess our souls in patience, and only to indulge

at intervals in the right to grumble which is by virtue of tradition ours. We have already been here a day and a half, and we know not how much longer it will be before the curtain rises and the first act of the drama can begin.

These boats are far from large and none too comfortable. We have taken ten days to come from Liverpool. Think of that, you who disdain to cross the water in anything but an ocean greyhound! What hardships we poor missionaries endure! Incidentally I want to tell you that my fellow passengers arch their eyebrows and look politely amused when I tell them to what place I am bound. I ventured to ask my roommate if she had ever been on Le Petit Nord. I wish you could have seen her face. I might as well have asked if she had ever been exiled to Siberia! I therefore judge it prudent not to thirst too lustily for information, lest I be supplied with more than I desire or can assimilate at this stage. I shall write you again when I

board the coastal steamer, which I am credibly informed makes the journey to St. Antoine once every fortnight during the summer months. Till then, *au revoir*.

Run-by-Guess, June 15

I LANDED on the wharf at St. John's to be met with the cheering information that the steamer had left for the north two days before. This necessitated a delay of twelve days at least. Will all the babies at the Orphanage be dead before I arrive on the scene of action? Shall I take the next boat back and be in England before the coastal steamer comes south to claim me? Conflicting emotions disturb my troubled soul, but "on and always on!"

The island boasts a railroad of which the rural inhabitants are inordinately proud. Just prior to my arrival a daily service had been inaugurated. Formerly the passenger trains ran only three times a week. There are no Sunday trains. As I had so much time to spare, I decided that I could not do better than spend some of it in going across the island and thus see the southern part of the country, catching my boat at Come-

by-Chance Junction on the return journey. Truth compels me to add that I find myself a sadder and wiser woman. I left St. John's one evening at six o'clock, being due to arrive at our destination at eight o'clock the following night. There is no unpleasant "hustle" on this railway, and you may wait leisurely and humbly for a solid hour while your very simple meal is prepared. If you do not happen to be hungry, this is only a delightful interlude in the incessant rush of modern life, but if perchance Nature has endowed you with a moderate appetite, that one hour seems incurably long.

All went well the first night, or at least my fellow passengers showed no signs of there being anything unusual, so like Brer Rabbit, I lay low and said nothing. At noon the following day a slightly bigger and more prolonged jolt caused the curious among us to look from the window. The engine, tender, and luggage van were derailed. As the speed of the trains never exceeds

twenty-five miles an hour, such little *contretemps* which occur from time to time do not ruffle the serenity of those concerned. Resigning myself to a delay of a few hours, I determined to alight and explore the country. But alas! I had no mosquito veiling, and to stand for a moment outside without this protection was to risk disfigurement for life. So I humbly yielded to adverse circumstances and returned to try and read, the previous bumping having made this out of the question. But the interior was by this time a veritable Gehenna, and no ventilation could be obtained, as the Company had not thought it necessary to provide their windows with screens. For twenty-five hours we remained in durance vile, until at last the relief train lumbered to our rescue and conveyed us to Run-by-Guess, our destination.

Northward Bound. On board
June 25

If you could have been present during the return journey from Run-by-Guess your worst prophecies would have seemed to you justified. The railroad is of the genus known as narrow-gauge; the roadbed was not constructed on the principles laid down by the Romans. In a country where the bones of Mother Earth protrude so insistently, it is beating the devil round the stump to mend the bed with fir branches tucked even ever so solicitously under the ties. That, nevertheless, was an attempt at "safety first" which I saw.

Towards morning a furious rain and wind storm broke over us. Before many minutes I noticed that my berth was becoming both cold and damp. Looking up I made out in the dim dawn a small but persistent stream pouring down upon me. I had had the upper berth

pushed up so as to get the air! Again the train came to an unscheduled stop. By this time assorted heads were emerging from behind the curtains, and from each came forcible protests against the weather. There was nothing to be done but to sit with my feet tucked up and my arms around my knees, occupying thus the smallest possible space for one of my proportions, and wait developments. Ten minutes later, after much shouting outside my window, a ladder was planted against the car, and two trainmen in yellow oilskins climbed to the roof. I noted with satisfaction that they carried hammers, tacks, and strips of tin. A series of resounding blows and the almost immediate cessation of the descending floods told how effective their methods had proved. Directly afterwards the startled squeak of the engine whistle, as if some one had trodden on its toe, warned us that we were off once more.

We landed (you will note that the nautical

phraseology of the country has already gripped me) in the same storm at Come-by-Chance Junction. But the next morning broke bright and shining, as if rain and wind were inhabitants of another planet. It is quite obvious that this land is a lineal descendant of Albion's Isle. Now I am aboard the coastal steamer and we are nosing our way gingerly through the packed floe ice, as we steam slowly north for Cape St. John. Yes, I know it is Midsummer's Day, but as the captain tersely put it, "the slob is a bit late."

The storm of two days ago blowing in from the broad Atlantic drove the great field of left-over pans before it, and packed them tight against the cliffs. If we had not had that sudden change in the weather's mind yesterday, we should not be even as far along as we now find ourselves.

You can form no idea of one's sensations as the steamer pushes her way through an ice jam.

For miles around, as far as the eye can reach, the sea is covered with huge, glistening blocks. Sometimes the deep-blue water shows between, and sometimes they are so tightly massed together that they look like a hummocky white field. How any one can get a steamer along through it is a never-ending source of amazement, and my admiration for the captain is unstinted. I stand on the bridge by the hour, and watch him and listen to the reports of the man on the cross-trees as to the prospects of "leads" of open water ahead. Every few minutes we back astern, and then butt the ice. If one stays below decks the noise of the grinding on the ship's side is so persistent and so menacing that I prefer the deck in spite of its barrels and crates and boxes and smells. Here at least one would not feel like a rat in a hole if a long, gleaming, icy, giant finger should rip the ship's side open down the length of her. As we grate and scrape painfully along I look back and see that the

ice-pan channel we leave behind is lined with scarlet. It is the paint off our hull. The spectacle is all too suggestive for one who has always regarded the most attractive aspect of the sea to be viewed from the landwash.

Of course the scenery is beautiful — almost too trite to write — but the beauty is lonesome and terrifying, and my city-bred soul longs for some good, homely, human "blot on the landscape." There are no trees on the cliffs now. I understand, however, that Nature is not responsible for this oversight. The people are sorely in need of firewood, and not being far-seeing enough to realize what a menace it is to the country to denude it so unscientifically, they have razed every treelet. Nature has done her best to rectify their mistake, and the rocky hills are covered with jolly bright mosses and lichens.

Naturally, there are compensations for even this kind of voyage, for no swell can make itself felt through the heavy ice pack. We steam along

for miles on a keel so even that only the throb of our engines, and the inevitable "ship-py" odour, remind one that the North Atlantic rolls beneath the staunch little steamer.

The "staunch little steamer's" whistle has just made a noise out of all proportion to its size. It reminded me of an English sparrow's blatant personality. We have turned into a "tickle," and around the bend ahead of us are a handful of tiny whitewashed cottages clinging to the sides of the rocky shore.

I cannot get used to the quaint language of the people, and from the helpless way in which they stare at me, my tongue must be equally unintelligible. A delightful *camaraderie* exists; every one knows every one else, or they all act as if they did. As we come to anchor in the little ports, the men from the shore lash their punts fast to the bottom of the ship's ladder, and clamber with gazelle-like agility over our side. If you happen to be leaning curiously over the rail near

by, they jerk their heads and remark, "Good morning," or, "Good evening," according as it is before or after midday. This is an afternoonless country. The day is divided into morning, evening, and night. Their caps seem to have been born on their heads and to continue to grow there like their hair, or like the clothing of the children of Israel, which fitted them just as well when they came out of the wilderness as when they went in. But no incivility is meant. You may dissect the meaning and grammar of that paragraph alone. You have had long practice in such puzzles.

Seventy-five miles later

We are out of the ice field and steaming past Cape St. John. This was the dividing line between the English and French in the settlement of their troubles in 1635. North of it is called the French or Treaty Shore, or as the French themselves so much more quaintly named it, "Le Petit Nord." It is at the north end of Le Petit Nord that St. Antoine is located.

The very character of the country and vegetation has changed. It is as if the great, forbidding fortress of St. John's Cape cut off the milder influences of southern Newfoundland, and left the northern peninsula a prey to ice and winds and fog. The people, too, have felt the influence of this discrimination of Nature. There is a line of demarcation between those who have been able to enjoy the benefits of the southern island, and those who have had to cope with the recurrent problems of the northland. I cannot

help thinking of the change this shore must have been from their beloved and smiling Brittany to those first eager Frenchmen. The names on the map reveal their pathetic attempts to stifle their *nostalgie* by christening the coves and harbours with the familiar titles of their homeland.

I fear in my former letter I made some rather disparaging remarks about certain ocean liners, but I want to take them all back. Life is a series of comparisons and in retrospect the steamer on which I crossed seems a veritable floating palace. I offer it my humble apologies. Of one thing only I am certain — I shall never, never have the courage to face the return journey.

The time for the steamer to make the journey from Come-by-Chance to St. Antoine is from four to five days, but when there is much ice these days have been known to stretch to a month. The distance in mileage is under three hundred, but because of the many harbours into

which the boat has to put to land supplies, it is really a much greater distance. There are thirty-three ports of call between St. John's and St. Antoine, most of which are tiny fishing settlements consisting of a few wooden houses at the water's edge. This coast possesses scores of the most wonderful natural harbours, which are not only extremely picturesque, but which alone make the dangerous shore possible for navigation. As the steamer puts in at Bear Cove, Poverty Cove, Deadman's Cove, and Seldom-Come-By (this last from the fact that, although boats pass, they seldom anchor there), out shoot the little rowboats to fetch their freight. It is certainly a wonderfully fascinating coast, beautifully green and wooded in the south, and becoming bleaker and barer the farther north one travels. But the bare ruggedness and naked strength of the north have perhaps the deeper appeal. To those who have to sail its waters and wrest a living from the harvest of the sea, this

must be a cruel shore, with its dangers from rocks and icebergs and fog, and insufficient lighting and charting.

Apart from the glory of the scenery the journey leaves much to be desired, and the weather, being exceedingly stormy since we left the ice field behind, has added greatly to our trials. The accommodations on the boat are strictly limited, and it is crowded with fishermen going north to the Labrador, and with patients for the Mission Hospital. As they come on in shoals at each harbour the refrain persistently runs through my head, "Will there be beds for all who come?" But the answer, alas, does not fit the poem. Far from there being enough and to spare, I know of two at least of my fellow passengers who took their rest in the hand basins when not otherwise wanted. Tables as beds were a luxury which only the fortunate could secure. Almost the entire space on deck is filled with cargo of every description, from building

lumber to live-stock. While the passengers number nearly three hundred, there are seating accommodations on four tiny wooden benches without backs, for a dozen, if packed like sardines. Barrels of flour, kerosene, or molasses provide the rest. Although somewhat hard for a succession of days, these latter are saved from the deadly ill of monotony by the fact that as they are discharged and fresh taken on, such vantage-points have to be secured anew from day to day; and one learns to regard with equanimity if not with thankfulness what the gods please to send.

There are many sad, seasick souls strewn around. If cleanliness be next to godliness, then there is little hope of this steamer making the Kingdom of Heaven. One habit of the men is disgusting; they expectorate freely over everything but the ocean. The cold outside is so intense as to be scarcely endurable, while the closeness of the atmosphere within is less so.

These are a few of the minor discomforts of travel to a mission station; the rest can be better imagined than described. If, to the Moslem, to

be slain in battle signifies an immediate entrance into the pleasures of Paradise, what should be the reward of those who suffer the vagaries of this northern ocean, and endure to the end?

My trunk is lost. In the excitement of carpentering incidental to the cloudburst, the crew of the train omitted to drop it off at Come-by-Chance. I am informed that it has returned across the country to St. John's. If I had not

already been travelling for a fortnight, or if Heaven had endowed me with fewer inches so that my clothing were not so exclusively my own, the problem of the interim till the next boat would be simpler.

I have had my first, and I may add my last, experience of "brewis," an indeterminate concoction much in favour as an article of diet on this coast. The dish consists of hard bread (ship's biscuit) and codfish boiled together in a copious basis of what I took to be sea-water. "On the surface of the waters" float partially disintegrated chunks of fat salt pork. I am not finicking. I could face any one of these articles of diet alone; but in combination, boiled, and served up lukewarm in a soup plate for breakfast, in the hot cabin of a violently rolling little steamer, they take more than my slender stock of philosophy to cope with. Yet they save the delicacy for the Holy Sabbath. The only justification of this policy that I can see is that, being a day of rest,

their stomachs can turn undivided and dogged attention to the process of digestion.

Did I say "day of rest"? The phrase is utterly inadequate. These people are the strictest of Sabbatarians. The Puritan fathers, whom we now look back upon with a shivery thankfulness that our lot did not fall among them, would, and perhaps do, regard them as kindred spirits. But they are earnest Christians, with a truly uncomplaining selflessness of life.

By some twist of my brain that reminds me of a story told me the other day which brings an old legend very prettily to this country. It is said that when Joseph of Arimathea was hounded from place to place by the Jews, he fled to England taking the Grail with him. The spot where he settled he called Avalon. When Lord Baltimore, a devout Catholic, was given a huge tract of land in the south of this little island, he christened it Avalon in commemoration of Joseph of Arimathea's also distant

journey. To the disgrace of the Protestants, the Catholic exiles arrived in the "land of promise" only to discover that the spirit of persecution was rampant in this then far-off colony.

Evidently the people of the country think that every man bound for the Mission is a doctor, and every woman a nurse. If my Puritan conscience had not blocked the way, I could have made a considerable sum prescribing for the ailments of my fellow passengers. One little thin woman on board has just confided to me, "Why, miss, I found myself in my stomach three times last week" — and looked up for advice. As for me, I was "taken all aback," and hastened to assure her that nothing approaching so astonishing an event had ever come within the range of my experience. I hated to suggest it to her, but I have a lurking suspicion that the catastrophe had some not too distant connection with the "brewis." By the way, all right-

minded Newfoundlanders and Labradormen call it "bruse."

Also by the way, it is incorrect to speak of *New*foundland. It is Newfound*land*. Neither do you go up north if you know what you are about. You go "down North"; and your friend is not bound for Labrador. She is going to "the Labrador," or, to be more of a purist still, "the Larbadore." Having put you right on these rudiments — oh! I forgot another: "Fish" is always codfish. Other finny sea-dwellers may have to be designated by their special names, but the unpretentious cod is "t' fish"; and the salutation of friends is not, "How is your wife?" or, "How is your health?" But, "How's t' fish, B'y?" I like it. It is friendly and different — a kind of password to the country.

I am glad that I am not coming here as a mere traveller. The land looks so reserved that, like people of the same type, you are sure it is well worth knowing. So when, perhaps, I have been

able to discover a little of its "subliminal self," the tables will be turned, and you will be eager to make its acquaintance. Then it will be my chance to offer you sage and unaccepted advice as to your inability to cope with the climate and its *entourage*. I too shall be able to prophesy unheeded a shattered constitution and undermined nerves. To be sure, old Jacques Cartier had such a poor opinion of the coast that he remarked it ought to have been the land God gave to Cain. But J. C. has gone to his long rest. After the length of this letter I judge that you envy him that repose, so I release you with my love.

St. Antoine Orphanage at last
Address for one year
July 6

I HAVE at last arrived at the back of beyond. We should have steamed right past the entrance of our harbour if the navigation had been in my hands. You make straight for a great headland jutting out into the Atlantic, when the ship suddenly takes a sharp turn round an abrupt corner, and before you know it, you are advancing into the most perfect of landlocked harbours. A great cliff rises on the left, — Quirpon Point they call it, — and clinging to its base like an overgrown limpet is a tiny cottage, with its inevitable fish stage. Farther along are more houses; then a white church with a pointed spire, and a bright-green building near by, while across the path is a very pretty square green school. Next are the Mission buildings in a group. Beyond them come more small houses — "Little Labrador" I learned

later that this group is called, because the people living there have almost all come over from the other side of the Straits of Belle Isle.

The ship's ladder was dropped as we came to anchor opposite the small Mission wharf. The water is too shallow to allow a large steamer to go into it, but the hospital boat, the Northern Light, with her draft of only eight feet, can easily make a landing there. We scrambled over the side and secured a seat in the mail boat. Before we knew it four hearty sailors were sweeping us along towards the little dock. Here, absolutely wretched and forlorn, painfully conscious of crumpled and disordered garments, I turned to face the formidable row of Mission staff drawn up in solemn array to greet us. As the doctor-in-charge stepped forward and with a bland smile hoped I had had a "comfortable journey," and bade me welcome to St. Antoine, with a prodigious effort I contorted my features into something resembling a grin, and limply shook his

outstretched hand. To-morrow I mean to make enquiries about retiring pensions for Mission workers!

No one had much sympathy with me over the loss of my trunk. They laughed and said I would be fortunate if it appeared by the end of the summer. You had better send me a box by freight with some clothing in it; I otherwise shall have to live in bed, or seek admission to hospital as a "chronic."

How perfectly dear of you to have a letter awaiting me at the Orphanage. Regardless of manners I fell to and devoured it, while all the "little oysters stood and waited in a row." Like the walrus, with a few becoming words I introduced myself as their future guardian, but never a word said they. As, led by a diminutive maid, I passed from their gaze I heard an awe-struck whisper, "It's gone upstairs!"

In answer to my questions the little maid informed me that the last mistress had left by the

boat I had just missed, and that since then the children had been in her charge, with such help and supervision as the various members of the Mission staff could give. I therefore felt it was "up to me" to make a start, and I delicately en-

quired when the next meal was due. An exhaustive exploration of the larder revealed two herrings, one undoubtedly of very high estate. As the children looked fairly plump, I concluded that they had only been on such meagre diet since the departure of the last "mistress." The barrenness of the larder suggested a fruitful topic of conversation with which to win the con-

fidence of these staring, open-mouthed children, and I therefore tenderly asked what they would most like to eat, supposing IT were there. One and all affirmed that "swile" meat was a delicacy such as their souls loved — and repeated questions could elucidate no further. Subsequently, on making enquiries of one of the Mission staff, I thought I detected a look which led me to suppose that I had not yet acquired the correct pronunciation of the word. We dined off the herring of lowly origin, and consigned the other to the garbage pail. Nerve as well as skill, I can assure you, is required to divide one herring into thirty-six equal parts. There is no occasion for alarm. I have not the slightest intention of starving these infants. To-morrow I go on a foraging expedition to the Mission commissariat department (there must be one somewhere), and then the fat years shall succeed the lean ones.

To-night I am too tired to do more, and there

is a quite absurd longing to see some one's face again. The coming year looks very long and very dreary, and although I know I shall grow to love these children, yet, oh, I wish they did not stare so when one has to blink so hard to keep the tears from falling.

July 7

MORNING! And the children may stare all they like. I no longer need to repress youthful emotions. All the same it is a trifle disconcerting. I had chosen, as I thought, a very impressive portion of Scripture for Prayers, and the children were as quiet as mice. But they never let their eyes wander from me for a single moment, until I began to feel I ought at least to have a smut on the tip of my nose.

The alluring advertisement of Newfoundland, as "the coolest country on the Atlantic seaboard in the summer," is all too painfully true. It is very, very cold at present, and the sun, if sun there be, is safely ensconced behind an impenetrable bank of fog. If this is summer weather, what will the winter be!

I started to write this to you in the morning, but the day has been one long series of interruptions. The work is all new to me and not exactly

what I expected, but the spice of variety is not lacking. I find it very hard to understand these children and it is evident from their faces that they fail to comprehend my meaning. Yet I have a lurking suspicion that when it is an order to be obeyed, their desire to understand is not overwhelming. The children are supposed to do the work of the Home under my superintendency, the girls undertaking the housework and the boys the outside "chores." Apparently from all I hear my predecessor was a strict disciplinarian, an economical manager, an expert needlewoman, and everything I should be and am not. The sewing simply appalls me! I confess that stitching for three dozen children of all sizes had not entered into my calculations as one of the duties of a "missionary"! Yet of course I realize they must be clad as well as taught. What a pity that the climate will not allow of a simple loin cloth and a string of beads. And how infinitely more becoming. Then, too, how much easier would be

the food problem were we dusky Papuans dwelling in the far-off isles of the sea. This country produces nothing but fish, and we have to plan our food supplies for a year in advance. How much corn-meal mush will David eat in twelve months? And if David eats so much in twelve months, how much will Noah, two months younger, eat in the same period of time? If one herring satisfies thirty-six, how many dozen will a herring and a half feed? Picture me with a cold bandage round my head seeking to emulate Hoover.

A little mite has just come to the door to inform me that her dress has "gone abroad." Seeing my mystified look, she enlightened me by holding up a tattered garment which had all too evidently "gone abroad" almost beyond recall. Throwing the food problem to the winds I set myself with a businesslike air to sew together the ragged threads. A second knock brought me the cheerful tidings that the kitchen fire had

languished from lack of sustenance. Now I had previously in my most impressive tones commanded one of the elder boys to attend to this matter, and he had promptly departed, as I thought, to "cleave the splits." Searching for him I found this industrious youth lying on his back complacently contemplating the heavens. To my remonstrance he somewhat indignantly remarked that he was only "taking a spell." A really magnificent and grandiloquent appeal to the boy's sense of honour and a homily on the dignity of labour were abruptly terminated by shrill cries resounding from the house. Rushing in, I was informed that Noah was "bawling" (which fact was perfectly evident), having jammed his fingers in trying to "hist" the window. In this country children never cry; they always "bawl."

I foresee that the life of a Superintendent of an Orphan Asylum is not a simple one, and that I shall be in no danger of being "carried to the

skies" on a "flowery bed of ease." Certain I am that there will only be opportunity to write to you at "scattered times"; so for the present, fare thee well.

Sunday, August 4

You see before you, or you would if my very obvious instead of merely my astral body were in your presence, a changed and sobered being. I have made the acquaintance of the Labrador fly, and he has made mine. The affection is all on his side. Mosquito, black fly, sand fly — they are all alike cannibals. You have probably heard the old story about the difference between the Labrador and the New Jersey mosquito? The Labrador species can be readily distinguished by the black patch between his eyes about the size of a man's hand. Of the lot I prefer the mosquito. He at least is open about his evil intentions. The black fly darts at you quietly, settles down on an un-get-at-able spot, and sucks your blood. If I did not find my appetite so unimpaired, I should fancy this morning I was suffering from an acute attack of mumps.

Mumps is at the moment in our midst, and as

is generally the case has fallen on the poorest of the community. In this instance it is a widow by the name of Kinsey, who has six children, and lives in a miserable hovel. More of her anon. Her twelve-year-old boy comes to the Home daily to get milk for the wretched baby, whom we had heard was down with the disease. When he came this morning I told him to stay outdoors while we fetched the milk, because I knew how sketchy are the precautions of his ilk against carrying infection. "No fear, miss," he assured me. "The baby was terrible bad last night, but he 's all clear this morning."

But to return to the Kinsey parent. She had eight children. The Newfoundlanders are a prolific race, and life is consequently doubly hard on the women. Her husband died last fall, leaving her without a sou, and no roof over her head. The Mission gave her a sort of shack, and took two of her kiddies into the Home. The place was too crowded at the time to take any more. The

doctor then wrote to the orphanages at the capital presenting the problem, and asking that they take a consignment of children. The Church of England Orphanage, of which denomination the mother is a member, was full; and the other one, which has just had a gift of beautiful buildings and grounds, "regretted they could not take any of the children, as their orphanage was exclusively for their denomination." The mother did not respond to the doctor's ironic suggestion that she should "turncoat" under the press of circumstances.

They tell a story here about Kinsey, the late and unlamented. Last spring a steamer heading north on Government business sighted a fishing punt being rowed rapidly towards it, the occupant waving a flag. The captain ordered, "Stop her," thinking that some acute emergency had arisen on the land during the long winter. A burly old chap cased in dirt clambered deliberately over the rail.

"Well, what's up?" asked the captain testily. "Can't you see you're keeping the steamer?"

"Have you got a plug or so of baccy you could

give me, skipper? I has n't had any for nigh a month, and it do be wonderful hard."

The captain's reply was unrepeatable, but for such short acquaintance it was an accurate résumé of the character of the applicant. *De mortuis nil nisi bonum* is all very well, but it depends on the *mortuis;* and that man's wife and children had been short of food he had "smoked away."

I have the greatest admiration for the women of this coast. They work like dogs from morning till nightfall, summer and winter, with "ne'er a spell," as one of them told me quite cheerfully. The men are out on the sea in boats, which at least is a life of variety, and in winter they can go into the woods for firewood. The women hang forever over the stove or the washtub, go into the stages to split the fish, or into the gardens to grow "'taties." Yet oddly enough, there is less illiteracy among the women than among the men.

Such a nice girl is here from Adlavik as maid in the hospital. Rhoda Macpherson is her name. She told me the other day that one winter the doctor of the station near her asked the men to clear a trail down a very steep hill leading to the

village, as the dense trees made the descent dangerous for the dogs. Weeks went by and the men did nothing. Finally three girls, with Rhoda as leader, took their axes every Sunday afternoon and went out and worked clearing that road. In a month it was done. The doctor now calls it "Rhoda's Randy."

Yesterday afternoon I was out with my camera. (Saturday you will note. I have learned already that to be seen on Sundays in this Sabbatarian spot, even walking about with that inconspicuous black box, is anathema.) A crowd of children in a disjointed procession had collected in front of the hospital, and the patients on the balconies were delightedly craning their necks. A biting blast was blowing, but the children, clad in white garments, looked oblivious to wind and weather. It was a Sunday-School picnic. A dear old fisherman was with them, evidently the leader.

"What's it all about?" I asked.

"We've come to serenade the sick, miss. 'T is little enough pleasure 'em has. Now, children, sing up"; and the "serenade" began. It was "Asleep in Jesus," and the patients loved it! I got my picture, "sketched them off," as the old fellow expressed it.

In the many weeks since I saw you — and it

seems a lifetime — I have forgotten to mention one important item of news. Every properly appointed settlement along this coast has its cemetery. This place boasts two. With your predilection for epitaphs you would be content. The prevailing mode appears to be clasped hands under a bristling crown; but all the same that sort of thing makes a more "cheerful" graveyard than those gloomily beautiful monuments with their hopeless "χαιρετε" that you remember in the museum at Athens. There is one here which reads:

Memory of John Hill
who Died
December 30th. 1889

Weep not, dear Parents,
For your loss 't is
My etarnal gain May
Christ you all take up
the Cross that we
Should meat again.

The spelling may not always be according to Webster, but the sentiments portray the love

and hope of a God-fearing people unspoiled by the roughening touch of civilization.

I must to bed. Stupidly enough, this climate gives me insomnia. Probably it is the mixture of the cold and the long twilight (I can read at 9.30), and the ridiculous habit of growing light again at about three in the morning. I am beginning to have a fellow feeling with the chickens of Norway, poor dears!

August 9

I WANT to violently controvert your disparaging remarks about this "insignificant little island." Do you realize that this same "insignificant little island" is four times bigger than Scotland, and that it has under its dominion a large section of Labrador? If, as the local people say, "God made the world in five days, made Labrador on the sixth, and spent the seventh throwing stones at it," then a goodly portion of those stones landed by mischance in St. Antoine. Indeed, Le Petit Nord and Labrador are so much alike in climate, people, and conditions that this part of the island is often designated locally as Labrador (never has it been my lot to see a more desolate, bleak, and barren spot). The traveller who described Newfoundland as a country composed chiefly of ponds with a little land to divide them from the sea, at least cannot be impeached for unveracity. In this northern

part even that little is rendered almost impenetrable in the summer-time by the thick underbrush, known as "tuckamore," and the formidable swarms of mosquitoes and black flies. All the inhabitants live on the coast, and the interior is only travelled over in the winter with komatik and dogs.

No, I am *not* living in the midst of Indians or Eskimos. Please be good enough to scatter this information broadcast, for each letter from England reveals the fear that I am in imminent danger of being scalped alive or buried in an igloo. There are a few scattered Eskimos on Le Petit Nord, but for the most part the inhabitants are whites and half-breeds. The Indians live almost entirely in the interior of Labrador and the Eskimos around the Moravian stations. I am living amongst the descendants of the fishermen of Dorset and Devon who came out about two hundred years ago and settled on this coast for the cod-fishery. Those who live in the south are

comparatively well off, but many in the north are in great poverty and often on the verge of starvation.

When I look about me and see this poverty, the ignorance born of lack of opportunity, the suffering, the dirt, and degradation which are in so large a measure no fault of these poor folk, I am overwhelmed at the wealth of opportunities. Here at least every talent one has to offer counts for double what it would at home.

Thousands of fishermen come from the south each spring to take part in the summer's fishery. The Labrador "liveyeres," who remain on the coast all the year round, often have only little one-roomed huts made of wood and covered with sods. In the winter the northern people move up the bays and go "furring." Both the Indians and Eskimos are diminishing in numbers, and the former at the present time do not amount to more than three or four thousand persons — and of these the Montagnais tribe

make up more than half. The Moravian missionaries have toiled untiringly amongst the Eskimos, and assuredly not for any earthly reward. They go out as young men and practically spend their whole life on the coast, their wives being selected and sent out to them from home!

The work of this Mission is among the white settlers. In the Home we have only one pure Eskimo, a few half-breeds (Indians and Eskimo), and the remainder are of English descent. Almost all are from Labrador.

I often fancy that I must surely have slept the sleep of Rip Van Winkle. When he woke he found that the world had marched ahead a hundred years. With me the process is reversed. I am almost inclined to yield a grudging agreement to the transmigrationalists, and believe that I am re-living one of my former existences. For the part of the country in which I have awakened is a generation or so behind the world in which we live. There is no education worthy

of the name, in many places no schools at all, and in others half-educated teachers eking out a miserable existence on a mere pittance. This is chiefly due to the antediluvian custom of dividing the Government educational grant on a denominational basis. A large proportion of the people can neither read nor write. There are no roads, no means of communication, no doctors or hospitals (save the Mission ones), no opportunities for improvement, no industrial work, practically no domestic animals, and on Labrador, taxation without representation! There is only one hospital provided by the Government for the whole of this island, and that one is at St. John's, which is inaccessible to these northern people for the greater part of the year. No provision whatever is made by the Government for hospitals for the Labrador. Again the only ones are those maintained by this Mission. Lack of education, lack of opportunity, and abundance of overwhelming poverty make up the lot of the

majority of people in this north part of the country. Little wonder from their point of view, that one youth, returning to this land after seeing others, declared that the man he desired above all others to shoot was John Cabot, the discoverer of Newfoundland.

August 15

You complain that I have told you almost nothing about these children, and you want to know what they are like. And I wish you to know, so that you will stop sending dolls to Mary who is sixteen, and cakes of scented soap to David who hates above all else to be washed. I find these children very difficult in some ways; many of them are mentally deficient, but it appears that no provision is made by the Government for dealing with such cases, and so there is nothing to do but take them in or let them starve. Some are very wild and none have the slightest idea of obedience when they first arrive.

One girl I have christened "Topsy," and I only wish you could see her when she is in one of her tantrums, which she has at frequent intervals. With her flashing black eyes, straight, jet-black hair, square, squat shoulders, she looks the very embodiment of the Evil One. She is

twelve, but shows neither ability nor desire to learn. Her habits are disgusting, and unless closely watched she will be found filling her pockets with the contents of the garbage pail —

and this in spite of the fact that we are no longer dining off one herring. She says that her ambition in life is to become like a fat pig! Last night,

when the children were safely tucked in bed and I had sat down to write to you, piercing shrieks were heard resounding through the stillness of the house. A tour of investigation revealed Topsy creeping from bed to bed in the darkness, pretending to cut the throats of the girls with a

large carving-knife which she had stolen for this purpose. To-day Topsy is going around with her hands tied behind her back as a punishment, and in the hope that without the use of her hands we may have one day of peace at least. Poor Topsy, kindness and severity alike seem unavailing. She steals and lies with the greatest readiness, and one wonders what life holds in store for her.

We have just admitted three children, so we now number more than the three dozen. One little mite of five was found last winter in a Labrador hut, deserted, half-starved, and nearly frozen to death. She was kept by a kindly neighbour until the ice conditions allowed of her being brought here. The other two, brother and sister, were found, the girl clothed in a sack, her one and only garment, and the boy in bed, minus even that covering. This is the type of child who comes to us.

The doctor in charge has just paid me a visit. He says there is an epidemic of smallpox in the island, and he wants all the children to be vaccinated. The number of cases of smallpox this year in this "insignificant little island" is greater *pro rata* than in any other country of the world. So two o'clock this afternoon is the time set apart for the massacre of the innocents.

The laugh is against me! Two of our boys fell ill with a mysterious sickness, and tenderly and

carefully were they nursed by me and fed with delicate portions from the king's table. I later learned with much chagrin that "chewing tobacco" (strictly forbidden) was the cause of this sudden onset. My sense of humour alone saved the situation for them!

The Children's Home
August 19

In response to my frantic cables your box reached here safely, but it has not reached me. Picture if you can my amazed incredulity yesterday to see an exact replica of myself as I once was, walking on the dock. I rubbed my eyes and stared. Yes, it *was* my purple gown. My first impulse was to jerk it off the culprit, but I decided on more diplomatic tactics. A very little detective work elucidated the mystery. You had addressed the box in care of the Mission, thinking doubtless, in your far-sighted, Scotch way, that if sent to an individual, the said individual would have duty to pay. Knowing all too well the chronic state of my pocket-book, you anticipated untoward complications. Now, none of the Mission staff pay duties. The contents of the box were mistaken for reinforcements for the charity clothing store, and to-day my purple chambray gown, "to memory dear," walks the

street on another. *Sic transit.* I should add that one of the modernists of our harbour has chosen it. The old conservatives regard our collarless necks and abbreviated skirts with horror. What with the loss *en route* of several necessary articles of apparel, and the discovery of this further depletion of my wardrobe, I regard the oncoming winter with some misgivings.

One of the crew on the Northern Light, *alias* the Prophet, so-called because he is spirit brother to the Prophet of Doom, took a keen relish in my discomfiture, or I fancied he did. He it was who put the question in the doctor's Bible class, "Is it religious to wear overalls to church?" The house officer had carefully saved a pair of clean khaki trousers to honour the Sunday services, but in the local judgment they were no fit garment for the Lord's house. Local judgment, I may add, was not so drastic in its strictures on boudoir caps. Some very pretty ones came to service on the heads of the choir, but the verdict

was a unanimously favourable one. A nomadic *Ladies' Home Journal* was responsible for their origin.

"Out of the mouths of babes," etc. I have been trying to teach the little ones the thir-

teenth chapter of Corinthians. Whilst undressing Solomon the other night I had occasion, or it seemed to me that I had, to speak somewhat sharply to one of the others. When I turned my attention again to Solomon, he enunciated solemnly in his baby tones, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not love, I am become as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal."

You complain most unjustly that I do not give a chronological account of events. I give you the incidents which punctuate my days, and as for the background, nothing could be simpler than to fill it in.

To divert your mind from such adverse criticism, let me tell you that there is a strong suspicion abroad that I am a devout adherent of the Roman Church. Rumours of this have been coming to me from time to time, but I determined to withhold the news till its source was less in question. Now I have it on the undeniable authority

of the Prophet. I have candles, lighted ones, on the dining-room table at dinner. *Post hoc, propter hoc* — and what further proof is needed!

Ananias has broken yet another window.

When I questioned him as to when the deed had been committed, he replied politely, but mournfully, that he really could not tell me how many YEARS ago it was, as if I were seeking to unearth some long undiscovered crime.

August 25

THE other day Topsy had the misfortune to fall out of bed and hit her two front teeth such a violent blow on the iron bar of the cot beside hers that bits of ivory flew about the dormitory. This necessitated a prompt matutinal visit to Dr. B., the dentist. As we waited our turn in the Convalescent Room, I overheard one patient-to-be remark to his neighbour, "They do be shockin' hard on us poor sailors. They says I've got to take a bath when I comes into hospital. Why, B'y, I has n't had a bath since my mother washed me!"

The ethics of dentistry here are so mixed that one needs a Solomon to disentangle them. Mrs. "Uncle Life" — her husband is Uncle Eliphalet — recently had all her teeth pulled out, or, to be more accurate, all her remaining teeth. As the operation involved considerable time, labour, and novocaine, she was charged for the benefit

of the hospital. When two shining sets, uppers and lowers, were ready for her, she was as pleased as a boy with his first jack-knife; but not so Uncle Life. He considered it a work of supererogation that not only must one pay to have the old teeth removed, but for the new ones to replace them.

Did I ever write you about our chambermaid's feet — the new one? Her name is Asenath, and she is so perfectly spherical that if you were to start her rolling down a plank she could no more stop than can those humpty-dumpty weighted dolls. 'Senath's temper is exemplary, and her intentions of the best; in fact, she will turn into a model maid.

But the process of turning is in progress at the moment. It began with our cook, a pattern of neatness and all the virtues, coming into my office and complaining, "One of us'll have to go, miss."

"What? Which?" I enquired, dazed by the

abruptness of this decision, and wondering whether she were referring to me.

"This morning, miss, you know how hot it was? Well, 'Senath comes into the kitchen and says to me, 'Tryphena, I finds my feet something wonderful.' 'Wash them, and change your stockings,' I says. 'Wash them! Why, Tryphena, I 'se feared to do that. I might get a chill as would strike in.'"

In a few well-chosen sentences I have explained to 'Senath the basic rules of hygiene and of this house regarding water and its uses. She has decided to stay and accept the inevitable weekly bath, but she warns me fairly that if she goes "into a decline," I must take the responsibility with her parents!

With your zeal for gardens, and your attachment to angle-worms — which you will recall I do not share — you would be interested in our efforts along these lines — the gardens, not the worms. In this climate a garden is a lottery, and

in ten seasons to one a spiteful summer frost will fall upon the promising potatoes and kill the lot just as they are ripening. The Eskimos at the Moravian stations put their vegetal charges to bed each night with long covers over the rows. The other day, in an old journal about the country, I came upon this passage, and it struck me "How history does repeat itself." It runs: "The soyle along the coast is not deep of earth, but bringing forth abundantly peason small, peason which our countrymen have sowen have come up faire, of which our Generall had a present acceptable for the rarenesse, being the first fruits coming up by art and industrie in that desolate and dishabited land." I can assure you that the sight of a "peason," however small, if it did not come out of a tin can, would be an acceptable offering to your friend. Even in summer we get no fresh vegetables or fruits with the exception of occasional lettuce or local berries. The epitome of this spot is a tin! In the same old journal

Whitbourne goes on to say that "Nature had recompensed that only defect and incommoditie of some sharpe cold by many benefits — with incredible quantitie and no less varietie of kindes of fish in the sea and fresh water, of trouts and salmons and other fish to us unknowen."

I have eaten fish (interspersed liberally with tinned stuff) and drunken fish and thought and spoken and dreamt fish ever since I arrived. But don't pity me for imaginary hardships. I like fish better than I do meat, and for that matter our winter meat supply is walking past my window this minute. He goes by the name of "Billy the Ox"; and I am informed that as soon as it begins to freeze, he is to be killed and frozen *in toto,* for the winter consumption of the staff, patients, and children. So our winter is not to consist of one long Friday.

August 28

You already know the worst about my leanings to Papacy; but to-day I propose to set your mind at rest on an idea with which you have hypnotized yourself — namely, that I am going to die of malnutrition during what you are pleased to term the "long Arctic winter." I have no intention of starving, and as for the "long Arctic winter," I do not believe there is any such beast, as the farmer said when he looked at the kangaroo in the circus.

I was sitting by my window quietly sewing the other day (that sentence alone should reveal to you how many miles I have travelled from your tutelage) when I overheard one of the children stoutly defending what I took at first to be my character. The next sentence disabused me — it was my figure under discussion.

"She's not fat!" averred Topsy. "I'll smack you if you says it again."

"Well," muttered David, the light of reason being thus forcibly borne in upon him, "she may not be 'zactly fat, but she's fine and hearty."

If this is the case, and my mirror all too plainly confirms the verdict, and the summer has not waned, what will the "last estate of that woman be," after the winter has passed over her? They tell me that every one here puts on fat in the cold weather as a kind of windproof jacket. I enclose a photograph of me on landing, so you may remember me as I was.

No, you need not worry either over communi-

cations in the winter. You really ought to have an intimate acquaintance with our telegraph service, after you have, so to speak, subsidized it during the past three months. It runs in winter as well as summer; and I see no prospect of its closing if you keep it on such a sound financial basis. Moreover, the building is devoted to the administration of the law in all its branches. One half of it is the post and telegraph office, while the other serves as the jail. The whole structure is within a stone's throw of the church and school, as if the corrective institutions of the place believed in intensive cultivation. But to return to the jail. The walls are very thin, and every sound from it can be plainly heard in the telegraph office adjoining. Friday morning the operator, a capable and long-suffering young woman, came over to complain to the doctor that she really found it impossible to carry out the duties of her office, if the feeble-minded Delilah Freak was to be incarcerated only six

inches distant from her ear. It seems that Delilah spends her days yelling at the top of her lungs, and Miss Dennis states that she prefers

to take telegraphic messages down in competition with the mail steamer's winch rather than with Delilah's "bawling."

I know all about competition in noises after trying to write in this house. The ceilings are low and thin, and the walls are near and thin, and the children are omnipresent and not thin, and their wants and their joys and their quarrels are as numerous as the fishes

in the sea, and there you have the problem in a nutshell.

Now I must "hapse the door," and hie me to bed. As a matter of fact the people here are far too honest for us to lock the doors. Such a thing as theft is unheard of. Some may call it uncivilized. I call it the millennium!

August 31

I BELIEVE that the writer who described the climate of this country as being "nine months snow and three months winter" was not far from the truth. In June the temperature of our rooms registered just above freezing point, in July we were enveloped in continuous fog, and in August we are having snow.

Such a tragic event has occurred. Our lettuce has been eaten by the Mission cow! You know how hard it is to get anything to grow here. Well, after having nearly killed ourselves in making a square inch of ground into something resembling a bed, we had watched this lettuce grow from day to day as the little green shoots struggled bravely against the frost and cold. Then a few nights ago I was awakened by the tinkle of a bell beneath my window. Hastily flinging on wrapper and shoes I fled to save our one and only ewe lamb. But all the morning

light revealed was a desperate cold in the head, and an empty bed from which the glory had departed.

Topsy has just been amusing herself by turning on the corridor taps to watch the water run downstairs! Oh! Topsy,

> ""T is thine to teach us what dull hearts forget
> How near of kin we are to springing flowers."

News has just reached us that the mail boat from St. Barbe to St. Antoine has gone ashore on the rocks and is a total wreck. Happily no lives were lost, but unhappily wrecks are of such frequent occurrence on this dangerous coast as to excite little comment.

Drusilla, aged five, has been to my door to enquire if the children may play with their dolls in the house. I believe in open-air treatment, so I replied with kindness, but firmly withal, that "out of doors" was the order of the day. I was a little electrified to hear her return to the playroom and announce that "Teacher says you are

to go out, every darned one of you!" I was equally electrified the other day to overhear Drusilla enquiring of her fellow philosophers which they liked the best, "Teacher, the Doctor, or the Lord Jesus Christ."

In the midst of writing to you I was called away to interview a young man from the other side of the harbour. He wanted me to give him some of the milk used in the Home, for his baby, as at the hospital they could only furnish him with canned milk, guaranteed by the label, he claimed, to give "typhoid, diphtheria, and scarlet fever"!

September 7

It is a windy, rainy night, and I have told Topsy, who has a cold, that she cannot come with us to church. After a wild outburst of anger she was heard to mutter that "Teacher would n't let her go to church because she was afraid she would get too good."

The fall of the year is coming on and the evenings are made wonderful by two phenomena — the departure of the cannibalistic flies, and the Northern lights. Twice at home I remember seeing an attenuated aurora and thinking it wonderful. No words can describe this display on these crisp and lovely nights. There is a tang and snap in the air, and the earth beneath and the heavens above seem vibrating with unearthly life. The Eskimos say that the Northern lights are the spirits of the dead at play, but I like to think of them, too, as the translated souls of the icebergs which have gone south and met a

too warm and watery death in the Gulf Stream. Certainly all the colours of those lovely monarchs of the North are reflected dimly in the heavens. The lights move about so constantly that one fancies that the soul of the berg, freed at last from its long prison, is showing the astonished worlds of what it is capable. The odd thing was that when I first saw them on a clear night, the stars shone through them, only they looked like Coleridge's "wan stars which danced between."

I can vouch for the truth of another "sidelight," though from only one experience. One night last week, clear and frosty, I had just gone to my room at about eleven o'clock when the doctor called me to come out and "hear the lights." I thought surely I must have misunderstood, but on reaching the balcony and listening, I could distinctly hear the swish of the "spirits" as they rushed across the sky. It sounds like a diminished silk petticoat which

has lost its blatancy, but retains its personality.

Little did I realize at the time my good fortune in arriving here in daylight. It seems that it is the invariable habit of all coastal steamers to reach here at night, and dump the dumbly resenting passengers in the darkness into the tiny punts which cluster around the ship's side. Since my arrival every single boat has appeared shortly before midnight, or shortly after. In either case it means that the men of the Mission must work all night landing patients and freight, and the next day there is a chastened and sleepy community to meet the forthcoming tasks. It is especially hard on the hospital folk, for the steamer only takes about twenty hours to go to the end of her run and return, and they try and send those cases which do not have to be admitted back by the same boat on her southern journey. This means an all-night clinic. But I can say to the credit of the patients and staff

that I have never heard one word of complaint. That is certainly a charming feature about this life. There are plenty of things to growl about, but one is so reduced to essentials that the ones selected are of more importance than those which afford such fruitful topics in civilization.

I have just overheard Gabriel informing the other children that "Satan was once an angel, but he got real saucy, so God turned him out of heaven." Paradise Lost in a sentence!

The night after the audible lights a furious rain and wind storm broke over us. No wonder the trees have such a struggle for existence, if these storms are frequent. They do not last long, but they are the real thing while they are in progress. I used to smile when I was told that the Home was riveted with iron bolts to the solid bedrock, but that night when I lay wide awake, combating an incipient feeling of *mal de mer* as my bed rocked with the force of the gale, I thanked the fates for the foresight of the build-

ers. Never before had I believed in the tale of the church having been blown bodily into the harbour; but during those wild hours of darkness I was certain at each succeeding gust that we were going to follow its example.

Dawn — a pale affair looking out suspiciously on the chastened world — broke at last, and I "histed" my window (to quote the estimable 'Senath). The rain had stopped. The cheated wind was whistling around the corners of the old wooden buildings, and taking out its spite on any passers-by who must venture forth to work. The harbour, usually so peaceful and so sheltered, was lashed into a cauldron of boiling white foam, and the rocks were swept so clean that they at least had "shining morning faces."

I dressed quickly and ran down to the wharf to enquire as to the health of the Northern Light. The first person I met was the Prophet. He was positively elate. If I were a pantheist

I should think him a relative of the northeast wind. The storm of the previous night had been exactly to his liking. All his worst prognostications had been fulfilled, and quite a bit thrown in *par dessus le marché.* He told me that a tiny, rickety house across the harbour had first been unroofed, and then one of the walls blown in. It is a real disaster for the family, for they are poor enough without having Kismet thus descend upon them.

The hospital boat had held on safely, but several little craft were driven ashore. Naturally the children love the aftermath of such an event, for the world is turned for them into one large, entrancing puddle, bordered with embryo mud pies.

Topsy again! I am informed that she has tried to convert her Sunday best into a hobble skirt, reducing it in the process to something hopelessly ludicrous. It can never, never be worn again.

My arm aches and I cannot decide whether it is from much orphan scrubbing or from much writing, but in either case I must bid you *au revoir.*

September 25

LAST night I was awakened by a terrific noise proceeding from the lower regions. Armed with my umbrella, the only semblance of a stick within reach, I descended on a tour of investigation. Opening the larder door I beheld six huge dogs, and devastation reigning supreme. These dogs are half wolf in breed, and very destructive, as I can testify. When I wildly brandished my umbrella, which could not possibly have harmed them, they jumped through the closed window, leaving not a pane of glass behind. This, I suppose, is merely a nocturnal interlude to break the monotony of life in a country which boasts no burglars.

The children attend the Mission school, and yesterday Topsy was sent home in dire disgrace for lying and cheating. She is not to be permitted to return until she is willing to confess and apologize. She thereupon tried to commit

suicide by swallowing paper pellets, and in the night the doctor had to be called in to prescribe. She is white and wan to-day, but when I went in to bid her good-night I found her thrilling over a new prayer which she had learned, and which she repeated to me with deep emotion:

> "Little children, be ye wise,
> Speak the truth and tell no lies.
> The LORD's portion is to dwell
> Forever in the flames of hell."

I want to tell you something about our babies. They are four in number. David, aged five, considers himself quite a big boy, and a leader of the others. His father was frozen to death in Eskimo Bay some years ago whilst hunting food for his family. Although David is always boasting of his strength and the superior wisdom of his years, yet he is really very tiny for his age. He is a delightful little optimist, who announces cheerfully after each failure to do right that he is "going to be good all the time now," to which

we add the mental reservation, "until next time." He is the proud possessor of a Teddy bear. This long-suffering animal was a source of great pleasure until a short time ago when David started making a first-hand investigation to find out where the "squeak" came from — an investigation which ended disastrously for the bear, however it may have furthered the cause of science.

Last month I went to Nameless Cove to fetch to the Home a little boy of three, of whom I have already written you. Nameless Cove is about twelve miles west of St. Antoine. I have never seen such a wretched hovel — a one-roomed log hut, completely destitute of furniture. The door was so low I had to bend almost double to enter. A rough shelf did duty for a bed, upon which lay an old bedridden man, while at the other end lay a sick woman with a child beside her, and crouched below was an idiot daughter. Altogether nine persons lived in this

hut, eight adults and this one boy. Ananias is an illegitimate child, and has lived with these grandparents since his mother lost her reason and was removed to the asylum at St. John's. The child was almost destitute of clothing, and covered with vermin. He has the face of a seraph, and a voice that lisps out curses with the fluency of a veteran trooper. Ananias is David's shadow; he follows him everywhere, and echoes all his words as if they were gems of wisdom, far above rubies. Indeed, when David has ceased speaking, one waits involuntarily for Ananias to begin in his shrill treble tones. He is a hopeless child to correct, for when you imagine you are scolding him very severely, and you look for the tears of penitence to flow, he puts up his little face with an angelic smile, and lisps, "Tiss me."

Drusilla, whose slight acquaintance you have already made, is three and comes from Savage Cove. The father has gradually become blind and the mother is crippled. Drusilla keeps us all

on the alert, for we never know what she will be doing next. On Sunday mornings she is put to rest with the other little ones while we are at church. On returning last Sunday I found that she had secured a box of white ointment (thought to be quite beyond her reach), and with her toothbrush painted one side of the baby's face white, which with her other rosy cheek gave her the appearance of a clown. Not content with portrait painting, Drusilla then turned her energies to house decoration, the result attained on the wall being entirely to the satisfaction of the artist, as was evidenced by the proud smile with which our outcry was greeted.

The real baby is Beulah, just two years, and she exercises her gentle but despotic sway over all, from the least to the greatest. She is continually upsetting the standard of neatness which was once the glory of this Home, by sprawling on the floors, dragging after her a headless doll

with sawdust oozing from every pore. A dilapidated bunny and several mangled pictures complete the procession. It is hopeless to protest, for she just looks as if she could not understand how any one could object to such priceless treasures. She awakens us at unconscionable hours in the morning, when all reasonable beings are still sleeping the sleep of the just, and keeps up a perpetual chatter interspersed with highly dangerous gymnastic feats upon her bed.

Can you find any babies throughout the British Isles to match mine?

October 20

SINCE last I wrote you we have had a very strenuous time in the Home; the entire family has been down with measles. Then when that was over and the children well, the sewing maid, whom I had engaged shortly after my arrival, gave notice, shook the dust from her feet, and I was left single-handed. It took the whole of my time to keep these forty-odd infants fed, clothed, and washed, and I had no leisure to write to you even at "scattered times." It seemed to me that the appetites of these *enfants terribles* grew abnormally, that their clothes rent asunder with lightning-like rapidity, and that they fell into mud heaps with even greater facility than usual. It was sometimes a delicate problem to decide which of many pressing duties had the prior claim. Whether to try and feed the hungry (the kitchen range having sprung a leak), to start to repair two hundred odd garments (the weekly

mend), or to resuscitate one of the babies (just rescued from the reservoir). At such times I would wonder if I were somewhere near attaining to that state of experience when I should be able to appreciate your alluring phrase, "the fun of mothering an orphanage."

I must begin and tell you now about the children we have received since my last letter. Mike, aged eight, came to us from St. Barbe Hospital, as he had no home to which he could return. Incidentally it takes the entire staff to keep this boy moderately tidy, for he and his garments have an unfortunate inclination to part asunder, and we are kept in constant apprehension for the credit of the Orphanage. But Mike, whether with his clothes or without, always turns up smiling and on excellent terms with himself, entirely regardless of the mental torture we endure as he comes into view. Indeed, the wider apart are his garments, the broader is his smile. He weeps quietly each night as we wash him, for

that is a work of supererogation for which he has at present no use.

Deborah and her brother Gabriel were here when I came. Their ages are eleven and five, and they come from the far north. Deborah was in the Mission Hospital at Iron Bound Islands for some time as the result of a burning accident. While trying to lift a pan of dog-food from the stove she upset the scalding contents over her legs. Her elder brother had to drive her eighteen miles on a komatik to the hospital, and the poor child must have suffered greatly. Gabriel is a very naughty, but equally lovable child. He is never out of mischief, but he is always very penitent for his misdeeds — afterwards! His bent is towards theology, and he speaks with the authority of an ancient divine on all matters pertaining thereto, and with an air of finality which brooks no argument. When some one was being given the priority in point of age over me, he was heard to indignantly exclaim that "Jesus

and Teacher are the oldest people in the world." He is no advocate for the equality of the sexes, and closes all discussion on equal rights by explaining that "God made the boys and Jesus the girls."

Our fast-coming winter is sending its harbingers, seen and unseen, into our harbour. Chief among these one notices the assertiveness of the dogs. All through the summer they slink pariah-like about the place, eating whatever they can pick up, and seeking to keep their miserable existence as much in the background as possible. Now the winter is approaching, and it is "their little day." Mrs. Uncle Life can testify to the fact that they are not wholly suppressed when it is not "their little day." Last summer she found no less important a personage than the leader of the team in her bed. Her newly baked "loaf" was lying on the pantry shelf before the open window. Whiskey (this place is strictly prohibition, but every team boasts its "Whis-

key") leaped in, made a satisfying banquet off her bread, and then forced open the door into her bedroom adjoining the pantry. He found it a singularly barren field for adventure, but after

his unaccustomed hearty meal the bed looked tempting. He was found there two hours later placidly asleep.

The children are looking forward to Christmas and are already writing letters to Santa Claus, which are handed to me with great secrecy to mail to him. I once watched the little

ones playing at Christmas with an old stump of a bush to which they attached twigs as gifts and gravely distributed them to one another. When I saw one mite handing a dead twig to a smaller edition of himself, and announcing in a lordly fashion that it was a PIANO, I realized what Father Christmas was expected to be able to produce.

November 1

My world is transformed into fairyland. Light snow has fallen during the night, and every "starigan," every patch of "tuckamore" is "decked in sparkling raiment white." As I was dressing I looked out of my window, and for the first time in my life saw a dog team and komatik passing.

The day was full of adventure. For the children the snow meant only rejoicing; but as the highway was as slippery as glass, and the older folk had not yet got their "winter legs," there were many minor casualties. Mrs. Uncle Life, aged seventy and small and spherical, solved the problem of the hills by sitting down and sliding. She commended the method to me, saying that it served very well on week days, but was lamentably detrimental to her Sunday best.

Ananias is developing fast and bids fair to rival Topsy. He has a mania for eating anything

and everything, and what he cannot eat, he destroys. Within the past few weeks he has swallowed the arm of his Teddy bear, half a cake of

soap, and a tube of tooth-paste. He has also bitten through two new hot-water bottles. During the short time he has been here he has broken more windows than any other child in the Home.

If he thinks politeness will save the day, he says in the sweetest way possible, "Excuse me, Teacher, for doing it"; but if he sees by my face that retribution is swift and sure, he says in the most pathetic of tones, "Teacher, I have a pain."

I must make you acquainted with our "Yoho." Every well-regulated fishing village has one, but we have to thank our neighbour, the Eskimo, for the picturesque name. In our more prosaic parlance it is plain "ghost." Many years ago when the Mission was in need of a building in which to accommodate some of its workers, it purchased a house belonging to a local trader by the name of Isaac Spouseworthy. This made an admirable Guest House; but it has since fallen into disuse for its original purpose, and is being employed as a temporary repository for the clothing sent for the poor, till the fine new storehouse shall have been built. This old Guest House has been selected by our local apparition

as a place of visitation. It is affirmed, on the incontrovertible testimony of the Prophet and no inconsiderable following, that the spirit returns of an evening to the old house he built forty years ago, to wander through the familiar rooms. The villagers see lights there nightly; and though all our investigation has failed to reveal any presence (barring the rats), bodily or otherwise, the bravest of them would hesitate many a long minute before he would enter the haunted spot after nightfall. Rumour has it that the Guest House is built on the site of an old French cemetery. Our "irrepressible Ike" therefore cannot lack for society, though how congenial it is cannot be determined. Judging from the records of the ceaseless rows between the French and English on Le Petit Nord, there must be some lively nights in ghostland.

The doctor suggested that if a burglar wished to steal the clothing, this spook would be his most effective accomplice, but such tortuous

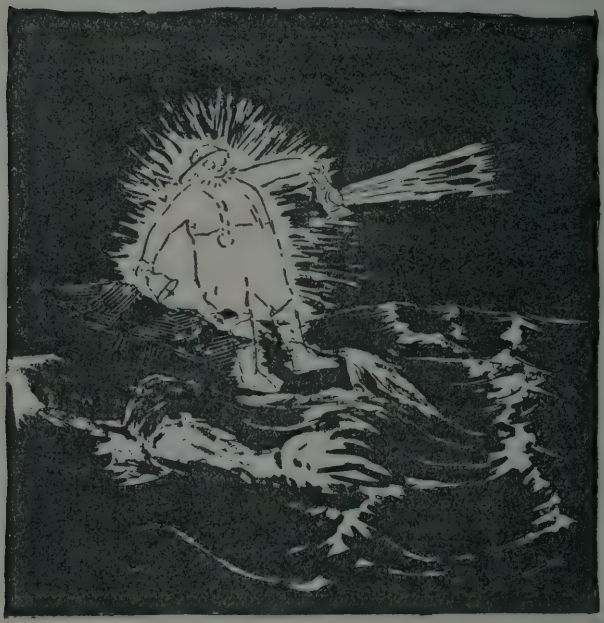
psychology has failed to satisfy the fishermen. To them we seem callous souls, to whom the spirit world is alien. This ghostly encroachment on our erstwhile quiet domain has had more than one inconvenient result. The Mission is very short of houses for its workmen, and was planning to rebuild and put in order a part of this now haunted domicile for one family. The man for whom it was destined now refuses to live there, as his children have vetoed the idea. In this land the word of the rising generation is law, and this refusal is therefore final.

The children of this North Country are given what they wish and when and how. Naturally the results of such a policy are serious. There are many cases of hopeless cripples about here who refused to go to hospital for treatment when their trouble was so slight that it could have been rectified. Now the children must look forward to a life of disability through their parents' short-sightedness. But when I think of

what it means to these poor women to have perhaps ten children to care for, and all the rest of the work of the house and garden on their shoulders, I cannot wonder that their motto is "peace at any price."

Spirits might be called the outstanding feature of our harbour, for the Piquenais rocks at the very entrance are the abode of another familiar *revenant*. The Prophet assures me that thirty years ago a vessel and crew were wrecked there, and on every succeeding stormy evening since that day, the captain, with creditable perseverance, waves his light on that wind- and surf-swept rock. In this instance the prophetical authority is in dispute, for there are those who assert that the light is shown by fairies to toll boats to their doom on the foggy point. The more scientifically minded explain the mysterious light as a defunct animal giving out gas. It must be a persistent gas which can retain its efficacy for thirty long and adventurous years.

In the course of these researches several interesting points of natural history and science have been elucidated. Doubtless you do not



know that all cats are related to the devil, but you can readily see the brimstone in their fur if you have the temerity to rub them on a dusky

evening. Neither has it come to your attention that under no consideration must you allow the water in which potatoes have been washed to run over your hands. In the latter event, warts innumerable will result.

Our cook has just come in with the news that supper is not to be forthcoming. 'Senath was left in charge while Tryphena went on an errand for me. Left-over salad was to have formed the basis of the evening meal, but the said basis has now disintegrated, 'Senath having placed the dish in a superheated oven. The nature of the resultant object is indeterminate, but uneatable. I solace myself that sanctified starvation will be beneficial to my "fine and hearty" figure.

We have suffered again with the dogs. One of the children's birthdays fell on Saturday, and we decided to give the whole "crew" ice-cream to fittingly celebrate the event. It was made in good time and put out to keep cool in what we

took to be a safe spot. The party preceding the *pièce de résistance* was in full swing when an ominous disturbance was detected from the direction of the woodshed. Investigation revealed two angry dogs alternately snarling at each other and devouring the last lick of the treat. The catholicity of canine taste was no solace to the aggrieved assembly.

The children have lately been making excursions into the theological field. The latest problem brought to me for settlement was, "Does God live in the Methodist Church?" Truly a two-horned dilemma. If I said "yes" the anthropomorphic teaching was undoubted; while if the answer were in the negative I should be guilty of fostering the abominable denominational spirit which ruins this land. My reply must have been unconvincing, for I overheard the children later deciding, the Methodist Church having been barred as a place of residence, that the attic was the only remaining

possibility. It is the one spot in the Home unvisited by them, and therefore "unseen."

Unseemly altercations have summoned me to the kitchen, and I return to close this overlong chronicle. I was met there by Tryphena, a large sheet in her hands, and an accusing expression on her face which stamped her as a family connection of the Prophet's.

"It's not my fault, miss," she began.

"No, Tryphena? Well, whose is it, and what is it?"

"Look at that sheet, miss, a new one. 'Senath was ironing, and had folded it just ready to put away. Then she suddenly wants a drink, so she goes off leaving the iron in the middle of the sheet. Half an hour later she remembers. When she got back, of course the iron had burnt its way straight through all the layers."

Aside from destruction, in what direction would you say that 'Senath's forte did lie?

November 17

I HAVE received your letter with its pointed remarks about the long delays of the mail-carrier. I consider them both unnecessary and unkind. But as David would say, "I am going to be good all the time now."

We have this moment returned from church, to which the children love to go; it is the great excitement of the week. They sit very quietly, except Topsy, but how much they understand I cannot say. The people sing with deliberation, each syllable being made to do duty for three, to prolong the enjoyment — or the agony — according as your musical talent decides. Frequently there is no one to play the instrument, and the hymns are started several times, until something resembling the right pitch is struck. Sometimes a six-line hymn will be started to a common metre tune, and all goes swimmingly until the inevitable crash at the end of the

fourth line. But nothing daunted, we try and try again. I have supplied our smiling-faced cherubs with hymn books in order that

> "Their voices may in tune be found
> Like David's harp of solemn sound"

— excuse the adaptation. This morning the service was particularly dreary. Hymn after hymn started to end in conspicuous failure, followed by an interminable discourse on the sufferings of the damned. But we ended cheerfully by warbling forth the joys of heaven —

> "Where congregations ne'er break up
> And Sabbaths never end!"

Last week we had a thrilling event; one of the girls formerly in this Home was married, and we all went to the wedding, even the little tots who are too young for regular services. They afterwards told me they would like to go on Sundays, so I imagine they think the marriage ceremony a regular item of Divine worship. Alas! I almost disgraced myself when the clergyman solemnly

announced to the intending bride and bridegroom that the holy estate of matrimony had been "ordained of God for the persecution of children"!

How you would have laughed to see me the other night. The steamer arrived at midnight, and as we were expecting some children I went down to meet them. There were three little boys, Esau, Joseph, and Nathan, eight, six, and four years of age. I bore them in triumph to the bathroom, feeling that even at that late hour cleanliness should be compulsory. But I soon desisted from my purpose and as quickly as possible bundled the dirty children into my neat, snowy beds! They kicked, they fought, they bit, they yelled and they swore! All my sleeping innocents awoke at the noise and added their voices to the confusion. I momentarily expected an inrush of neighbours, and a summons the following day for cruelty to children.

Uriah has come to inform me that he cannot "cleave the splits," as his "stomach has capsized." I felt it incumbent to administer a dose of castor oil, thinking that might be sufficient punishment for what I had reason to believe was only a dodge to escape work. It was hard for me to give the oil, but harder still to have the boy look up after it with a quite cherubic smile, and ask if it were the same oil as Elisha gave the widow woman!

Whatever can survive in this land of difficulties survives with a zeal and vitality which only proves the strength of the obstacles overcome. The flies, the mosquitoes, and the rats are proofs. We have none of your meek little wharf rats here. Ours are brazen imps, sleek and shameless, undaunted by cats or men. Their footmarks are as big as those of young puppies (withal not too well-fed puppies), and their raids on man and beast alike ally them with the horde Pandora loosed. Each day the toll mounts. One

morning Miss Perrin, the head nurse, awakened to find one of her prize North Labrador boots gnawed to the rim. All that remained to tell the

tale was the bright tape by which it was hung up, and the skin groove through which the tape threads.

On the next occasion of their public appearance the night nurse was summoned by agonized shrieks to the children's ward. A large rodent had climbed upon Ishimay's bed and bitten her. There were the marks of his teeth in her hand, and the blood was dripping. Nor do they limit their depredations to the hospital. The barn man turned over a bale of hay last week and disclosed no less than twenty-seven rats young and old, fat and lean, though chiefly fat. I rejoice to record that this galaxy at least has departed Purgatory-wards. The dentist left a whole bag of clean linen on the floor of his bedroom. The morning following he found that the raiders had eaten their way through the sack, cutting a series of neat round holes in each folded garment as they progressed. The scuffling and the squealing and the scraping and the

gnawing and the scratching of rats in the walls and cupboards are worse than any phalanx of "Yohos" ever summoned from spookland! Oh! Pied Piper of Hamelin, why tarry so long!

December 14

THE last boat of the season has come and gone and now we settle down to the real life of the winter. Plans innumerable are under way for winter activities, and the children are on tiptoe over the prospect of approaching Christmastide. Their jubilations fill the house, and writing is even more difficult than usual.

For days before the last steamer finally reached us there were speculations as to her coming. Rumour, a healthy customer in these parts, three times had it that she had gone back, having given up the unequal contest with the ice. As all our Christmas mail was aboard her, the atmosphere was tense. Then came the news from Croque that she was there, busily unloading freight. Six hours later her smoke was sighted, and from the yells my bairns set up, you would have thought that the mythical sea serpent was entering port. She butted her way into

the standing harbour ice as far as she could get, and promptly began discharging cargo. Teams of dogs sprang up seemingly out of the snow-covered earth, and in a mere twinkling our frozen and silent harbour was an arena of activity. The freight is dumped on the ice over the ship's side with the big winch, and each man must hunt for his own as it descends. Some of the goods are dropped with such a thud that the packages "burst abroad." This is all very well if the contents are of a solid and resisting nature; but if butter, or beans, or such like receive the shock, most regrettable results ensue.

During the hours of waiting here she froze solidly into the ice, and had to be blasted out before she could commence her journey to the southward. She has taken the mails with her, and this letter must come to you by dog team — your first by that method.

In the early part of this summer three little orphan girls came to us from Mistaken Cove.

Their names are Carmen, Selina, and Rachel, and their ages, ten, seven, and five. Their father has been dead for some years, and the mother recently died of tuberculosis. They did look such a pathetic little trio when they first arrived. I went down to the wharf to meet them, and three quaint little figures stepped from the hospital boat, with dresses almost to their feet. Carmen held the hands of her two sisters, and greeted me with "Are you the woman wot's going to look after we?" I assured her that I hoped to perform that function to the best of my ability, and then she confided to me that she had brought with her a box containing her mother's dresses and her mother's hair. I fancy the responsibility of the entire household must have rested on Carmen's tiny shoulders; she is like a little old woman, and even her voice is care-worn. I hunted up some dolls for the two younger kiddies, but had not the courage to offer one to their elder sister. She evidently felt that dolls

were altogether too precious for common use, and carefully explained to her charges that they were only for Sundays! When I next went to the playroom it was to find the three little sisters sitting solemnly in a row on the locker with their dolls safely packed away beneath. I persuaded them that dolls were not too good for "human nature's daily food," and since then they have been supremely happy with their babies.

Carmen is so devoted to little Rachel that she cannot bear the thought of her being in trouble. Rachel is very human, and in the brief time she has been with us has had many falls from the paths of rectitude.

One day shortly after their arrival Rachel had been naughty, and I had taken her upstairs to explain to her the enormity of her offence, Carmen standing meanwhile at the bottom of the stairs wringing her hands. When Rachel reappeared and announced that she had not even been punished, Carmen was seen to give her a

good slap on her own account, although evidently well pleased that no one else had dared to touch her child. Carmen is extremely religious, and her prayers at night are lengthy and devout. She starts off with the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' Creed; several collects follow, and she concludes with a "Hail Mary!"

You have already made the acquaintance of Billy the Ox, the now dear departed, who constitutes our winter's frozen meat supply. Our allotted portion of him is hung in the balcony outside my window. Being on the second floor it was thought to be sanctuary from marauders. Last night I was awakened by an uneasy feeling of a presence entering my room. Starting up, I made out in the moonlight the great tawny form of one of our biggest dogs. He was in the balcony making so far futile leaps to secure a section of Billy. My shout discouraged him, and he jumped off the roof to the snow beneath. He had managed to scale the side of the house — but

how? For some time I was at a loss to discover, till I remembered a ladder which had been placed perpendicularly against the wall on the other side. One of the double windows had broken loose in a recent storm of wind, and the barn man had had to go up and mend it. True to type he had left the ladder *in statu quo.* Up master dog had climbed straight into the air, along the slippery rungs of the ladder. When he reached the level of the tempting odour, he had alighted on the balcony roof. Then, pursuing the odour to its lair, he had discovered Billy, and me!

At breakfast I told my adventurette, and the story was instantly capped with others. Only one shall you have. The doctor was away on a travel last winter, and late one blustersome night came to a little village. He happened to have a very beautiful leader of which he was inordinately careful, so he asked his host for the night if he had a shed into which he could put

Spider out of the weather. "Why, to be sure, just at the left of the door." It was dark and blowing, and the doctor went outside and thrust the beastie into the only building in sight. After breakfast he went with his host to get the dogs.

When he started to open the door of the shelter in which Spider was incarcerated, the fisherman burst out in dismay, "You never put him in there? That's where I keeps my only sheep." At that second the dog appeared, a spherical and satisfied specimen. He had taken the stranger in — completely.

The cold is intense, and to combat it in these buildings of green lumber is a task worthy of Hercules. We make futile attempts to keep the pipes from freezing; but the north wind has a new trump each night. He squeezes in through every chink and cranny, and once inside the house goes whistling malignantly through the chilly rooms and corridors. We keep an oil stove burning in our bathroom at night with a kettle of water on it ready for our morning ablutions. To-day, when I went in to dress — one does not dress in one's bedroom, but waits in bed till the bathroom door's warning slam informs that the coast is clear — there was the stove still merrily burning, and there was the kettle of water on it — FROZEN.

Next month there is to be a sale in Nameless Cove, twelve miles to the westward of us. The doctor has asked me to attend. I accepted delightedly, as twenty-four hours free from fear of rats and frozen pipes draws me like a magnet.

Moreover, who would n't be on edge if it were one's first dog drive!

I found Gabriel crying bitterly in bed the other night because he had in a fit of mischief thrown a stone at the Northern lights, which is regarded as an act of impiety by the Eskimo people. It was some time before I could pacify the child, or get him to believe that no dire results would follow his dreadful deed. But at length when "comforting time" was come for him, he consoled himself by supposing that Teacher must be "stronger than the devil."

December 27

I CERTAINLY was never born to be a teacher and it is something to discover one's limitations. For several Sundays now I have been labouring to instruct our little ones in the story of the birth of Jesus, and I have repeated the details again and again in order to impress them upon their wandering minds. Last Sunday I questioned them, and finally asked triumphantly, "Well, David, who was the Babe in the manger?" With a wild look round the room for inspiration, David enunciated with swelling pride, "Beulah, Teacher."

We had a lovely time on Christmas. The night before the children hung up their stockings, but it was midnight before I could get round to fill them, they were so excited and wakeful. I "hied me softly to my stilly couch," and was just dropping off into delicious slumber when at 1 A.M. the strains of musical instruments (which you had sent) were heard below.

Then I appreciated to the full the sentiment of that poet who sang:

> "Were children silent, we should half believe
> That joy were dead, its lamp would burn so low."

Later in the day we had our Christmas tree, when Topsy was overjoyed at receiving her first doll. There is something very sweet about the child in spite of all her wilful ways, and she is a real little mother to her doll.

We had a great dinner, as you may imagine. I overheard some of the little boys teasing Solomon, who is only three, to see if he would not forgo some particular choice morsel upon his plate, to which an emphatic "no" was always returned. Then by varying gradations of importance came the question, would he give it to Teacher? The answer not being considered satisfactory, Gabriel felt that the time had come for the supreme test, Would Solomon give it to God and the angels? The reply left so much to be desired that it is better unrecorded.

In our harbour lives a blind Frenchman, François Détier by name. He came here in his youth to escape conscription. The fisher people have travelled a long road since the old feuds which scarred the early history of Le Petit Nord, and François is a much-loved member of the community. Since the oncoming of the inoperable tumour, which little by little has deprived him of his sight, the neighbours vie with each other by helping him. One day a load of wood will find its way to his door. The next a few fresh "turr," a very "fishy" sea auk, are left ever so quietly inside his woodshed — and so it goes. It is a constant marvel to me that these people, who live so perilously near the margin of want, are always so eager to share up. François is sitting in our cellar as I write pulling nails from old boxes with my new patent nail-drawer. A moment ago I could not resist the temptation of putting the *Marseillaise* on the gramophone, and I went down to find

him with tears rolling down his cheeks as he hummed,

> "Allons, enfants de la Patrie,
> Le jour de gloire est arrivé."

We've invented a new job for him; he is to "serve" our pipes with bandages. This means swathing them round and round, and finally adding an outer covering of newspaper, which has a much-vaunted reputation for keeping cold out.

Let me tell you the latest epic of the hospital pipes. Those to the bathroom run through the office. In the last blizzard they burst. The fire in the fireplace was a conflagration; the steam radiator was singing a credible song; and as the water trickled down the pipe from the little fissure, it froze solid before it was three inches on its way!

A friend sent me for Christmas a charming little poem. One verse runs:

> "May nothing evil cross this door,
> And may ill fortune never pry

About these windows; may the roar
And rains go by.

"Strengthened by faith, these rafters will
Withstand the battering of the storm;
This hearth, though all the world grow chill,
Will keep us warm."

I am thinking of hanging the card opposite our pipes as a reminder of the "way they should go."

January 15

THE journey to Nameless Cove Fair was all that I had hoped for and a little more thrown in to make weight. Clear and shining, with glittering white snow below and sparkling blue sky above, the day promised fair in spite of a mercury standing at ten below zero, and a number of komatiks from the Mission started merrily forth. All went well, and we reached Nameless Cove without adventure, but at sundown the wind rose. When we left the sale at ten o'clock to return to the house where I was to spend the night, we had to face the full fury of a living winter gale. I "caught" both my cheeks on the way, or in common parlance I froze them. All through that long tug we were cheered by the thought of a large jug of cream which we had placed on the stove to thaw when we left the house. Do you fancy that cream had thawed? Not a bit of it. The fire was doing its best, but

old Boreas was holding our feast prisoner. It had not even begun to disintegrate around the edges. We cut lumps from the icy mass, dropped them into our cocoa (which we made by cooking it inside the stove and directly on top of the coals), hastily popped the mixture into our mouths before it should have a chance to freeze *en route*, and went promptly to bed. I draw a veil over that night. I drew everything else I could find over me in the course of it. A sadder and a wiser and a chillier woman I rose the morrow morn. Another member of the staff, who had slept in an adjoining house, froze his toe in bed.

When we reached home, and I left the komatik at the hospital door, I made out 'Senath dancing in an agitatedly aimless fashion on our platform. She was also waving her arms about. For a moment it crossed my mind that she had lost her modicum of wits, but as she was immediately joined by Tryphena, I gave up the theory as untenable, and continued to hasten up

the hill to the Home. Our boiler had sprung, not one but many leaks, and the precious hot water destined for the cleansing of forty was flooding

the already spotless kitchen floor. As it is the middle of the week I had not suspected this calamity, Sunday being the invariable day se-

lected for all burst pipes, special rat banquets, broken noses, toothaches, skinned shins, and such misadventures. The problem now presenting itself for prompt solution is: 20° below zero, a gale blowing from the northwest, twoscore small, unwashed orphans, and a burst boiler!

January 21

THE oldest inhabitants, and all the others as well, claim that this is the most remarkable winter in thirty years. Not that one is deceived. I suspect them rather of making excuses for the consistently disconcerting climate of Britain's oldest colony.

All the same, literally the worst storm I ever experienced has been in progress for the last two days. It began in the morning by the falling of a few innocent flakes. Then the north wind decided to take a hand. All night and all day and all night again it shrieked around the house, driving incredible quantities of snow before it. Half an hour after it began, you could not see two yards in front of your face. The man who attends to the hospital heating-plant had to crawl on his hands and knees in order to reach his destination, taking exactly one hour to make the distance of two hundred yards.

At this institution it is the time-honoured custom to rise at five-thirty each morning, which custom, although doubtless good for our immortal souls, is distinctly trying to our too painfully mortal flesh. Added to which, in spite of all our efforts, our pipes are frozen, and in this country the ground does not thaw out completely until July or August, when we are making preparations for being frozen in again. Think of what this means for a household of over forty when every drop of water has to be hauled in barrels by our boys, and the superintendent has to stand over them to compel them to bring enough. Cleanliness at such a cost must surely be a long way towards godliness. I can now appreciate the story of the chaplain from a whaling ship who is said to have wandered into an encampment of the Eskimos. He told the people of heaven with all its glories, and it meant nothing to these children of the North; they were not interested

in his story. But when he changed his theme and spoke of hell, with its everlasting fires which needed no replenishing, they cried,

"Where is it? Tell us that we may go"; and big and little, they clambered over him, eager for details.

By morning every room on the windward side of our house looked like the inside of an igloo. The fine drift had silted in through each most minute cranny and crevice — even though we

have double windows all over the building; and on the night in question we had decided that sufficient fresh air was entering in spite of us to permit our disobeying our self-imposed anti-tuberculosis regulations. The wind and snow are so persistent and so penetrating that the merest slit gives them entrance, and the accumulations of such a night make one fancy in the morning that the King of the Golden River has paid an infuriated visit to our part of the globe. When I went into the babies' dormitory every little bed was snowed under, and only the children's dark hair contrasted with the universal whiteness.

The second night I verily thought the house would come about our ears. The gale had increased in fury, the thermometer stood at thirty below, and I stayed up to be ready for emergencies. At midnight, thinking one room must surely be blown in, I carried the sleeping babes into another wing of the house. If for any reason we had had to leave the building that night,

none of us could have lived to reach a place of safety. I wish you could have seen us the following morning. The snow had drifted in so that in places it was over six feet high. I ventured out and found that every exit but one from the Home was snowed up. We had therefore to dig ourselves out of the woodshed door and into the others from the outside. You make a dab with a shovel in the direction where you think you last saw the desired door before the storm, and trust the fates for results. Part of our roof has blown off and our chimney is in a tottering condition.

The greatest menace was the telegraph wires. The drifts in places were so huge that as one walked along, the wires were liable to trip one up. The doctor has just taken a picture of the dog team being fed from the third-story window of the hospital. They are clustered on the snow just outside and on a level with the bottom of the window. Some of the fishermen in their tiny

cottages had to be dug out by kindly neighbours, as they were completely snowed under!

The storm will greatly delay travelling and it may be almost spring before this reaches you. It may interest you to know how my letters come to you in the winter-time, and then perhaps you will not wonder so much at the delays. The mail is carried across country to Mistaken Cove, on the west coast, and then by eight relays of couriers with their dog teams to Deerlake where the railway touches. It is a slow method of progress, and there are countless delays owing to the frequent blizzards. Often the mail men fail to make connections, and the letters may lie a week or a fortnight at some outlandish station. At one place the postmaster cannot even read, and the letters have to be marked with crosses at the previous stopping-places, to indicate the direction of their destination. Another postmaster, well known for his dishonesty, failed to get removed by the authorities because he was the

only man in the place who could either read or write, and was therefore indispensable. Formerly all the letters had to go to St. John's, a day's extra journey, and be sorted there, sent back across the island to Run-by-Guess, eight hours across Cabot Straits, and then across the Atlantic to England. In this way a letter might take nearly three months to make the journey, and we are sometimes that length of time without news.

Now a "mild" has set in, and the incessant drip, drip, drip on the balcony roof outside my window makes me perfectly understand how lunacy and death follow the persistent falling of a single drop on one spot on the forehead.

February 11

LAST week I had a three days' "cruise" while the doctor considerately sent a nurse up here to try her hand at my family. This time the cruise was "on the dogs" instead of the rolling sea. We left for Belvy (Bellevue) Bay in good time in the morning — "got our anchors early," as our "carter" put it. The animation of the dogs, the lovely snow-covered country, the bright winter's sun pouring down, and doubly brilliant by reflection from the dazzling snow, the huge bonfire in the woods where we "cooked the kettle," all make one understand the call which the gipsy answers. Of course there is another side to the story, when one is caught out in bitter weather in a blizzard of driving snow and sleet, and loses the way, or perhaps has to stay out in the open through the night. For instance, this winter four of the Mission dogs have perished through frostbite on these journeys; and only last week we

heard that one of the mail carriers on the west coast had been frozen to death.

A few years ago one dark and stormy night the Church of England clergyman was called to the sick-bed of a parishioner. He set out at once to cross the frozen bay and reached the cottage in safety. After a visit with the dying man he started on his homeward way. It was cold but clear, and he covered half the distance without trouble. Then the weather veered and blinding snow began to drive. The traveller lost his way battling against it, and finally sank down utterly exhausted. He was found dead in the morning on the open bay.

A day's trip brought us to Grevigneux, a charming little village nestling in a great bowl formed by the towering cliffs above and around it. Every one in the settlement is a Roman Catholic. Never did I receive such a welcome; the people are so friendly and unspoiled. The priest is a Frenchman, sensible, hearty, full of

humour and love for his people. Both his ideas and his manner of expressing them are naïve and appealing. I had been told that in his sermons he admonished certain members of his flock by name for their shortcomings. When I questioned him about this he gave me the following explanation: "You see, miss, when I die I shall stand before the Lord and my people will be standing behind me. The Lord will look them over and then look at me, and if any one of them is n't there he will say, 'Cartier, where is Tom Flannigan?' And I should have to answer, 'Gone to Purgatory for stealing boots.' And the Lord will say to me, 'Why, did n't he know better than to steal boots? You ought to have told him.' Whatever could I say for myself then?"

The next night we spent at Lance au Diable, locally known as "Lancy Jobble." In this place there is a "medicine man," with methods unique in science. He is the seventh son of a seventh son, and his healing powers are reputed to be

little short of miraculous. Legend has it that such must never request payment for services, nor must the patient ever thank him, lest the efficacy of the cure be nullified. He is an unselfish man, a thorough believer in his own "gift"; and last summer, for instance, right in the middle of the fishing season, he walked thirty miles through swamp and marsh ridden with black flies, to see a sick woman who desired his aid. Doubtless the spell of his buoyant personality does bring comfort and relief. In the adjoining settlement of Bareneed lives an enormously fat old woman of seventy-odd summers. Life passes over her, and its only effect is to make her rotund and unwieldy. When the sick come to Brother Luke for treatment, if any of the few drugs which he has accumulated chance to have lost their labels — a not uncommon contingency in this land of mist and fog — he takes down a likely-looking bottle from the shelf, and tries a dose of the contents on this Mrs. Goochy — and

awaits results. If nothing untoward transpires, he then passes the medicine on to the patient. Mrs. Goochy has a strong acquisitive bias, and

raises no objections to this vicarious proceeding. She argues: "I does n't need 'un now, but there be's no tellin'. I may need 'un when I can't get 'un."

Occasionally the sailing is not so smooth. While we were there the doctor saw a case of a woman from whom this Æsculapius had attempted to extract an offending molar, his only instrument being a kind of miniature winch

which screws on to the undesired tooth. Its action proved so prompt and powerful that not only did it remove the tooth intended, but four

others as well, and the entire alveolar process connected with them.

It often made me feel ashamed to find how much some of these people have made of their meagre opportunities. At one house a mother told me that she had only been able to go to school for six months when she was a girl, yet

she had taught herself to read, and later her children also. She showed me most interesting articles which she had written for a Canadian newspaper describing the life on Le Petit Nord. She often had to sit up until two in the morning to knit her children's clothes, and rise again at dawn to prepare breakfast for the men of the household.

The following day saw us homeward bound, only this time the travelling was not so romantic, for a "mild" had set in, and the going was superlatively slushy. The dogs had all they could do to drag the komatik with the luggage on it. The humans walked, generally in front of the dogs, and on snow racquets, to make the trail a bit easier for the animals. This may sound an interesting way to spend a winter's day, but after twenty minutes of it you would cry "enough." When we reached Belvy Bay the ice around the shore was broken into great pans, but in the middle it looked good. To go round is an endless task,

so we risked crossing. It was easy to get off to the centre, for the big pans at the edge would float a far greater weight than a komatik and dogs and three people. The ice in the middle, however, which had looked so sure from the landwash, proved to be "black" — that is, very, very thin, though being salt-water ice, it was elastic. It was waving up and down so as almost to make one seasick, but in its elasticity lay our only chance of safety. We flung ourselves down at full length on the komatik to give as broad a surface of resistance as possible, and what encouragement was given the dogs we did with our voices. Four miles did we drive over that swaying surface, and though at the time we were too excited to be nervous, we were glad to reach the "*terra firma*" of the standing ice edge.

At each place we were received with the most cordial welcome, and scarcely allowed even to express our gratitude. It was always they who were so eager to thank us for giving them un-

asked the "pleasure of our company." Their reception is always very touching. They put the best they have before you and will take nothing for their hospitality.

In my various letters to you I have so often taken away the characters of our dogs that I must tell you of one, just to show that I have not altered in my devotion to our "true first friend." This dog's name was "Black," and he lived many years ago at Mistaken Cove. The tales of his beauty, his cleverness at tricks, and his endurance of difficulties are still told, but chiefly of his devotion to his master. After years of this companionship the beloved master died and was buried in the woods near his lonely little house. Black was inconsolable. He would eat nothing; he started up at every slightest noise hoping for the familiar whistle; he haunted the well-worn woodpath where they had had so many happy days together. Finally he discovered his master's grave and was found frantically tearing at the

hard earth and heavy stones. Nor would he leave the spot. Food was brought him daily, but it went untouched. For one whole week he lay in the wind and weather in the hole he had dug on the grave. There the children found him on the eighth morning curled up and apparently asleep. His long quest and vigil were ended, for he had reached the happy hunting grounds. Who shall say that a beloved hand and voice did not welcome him home?

St. Antoine Children's Home (by courtesy)
February 28

Of one thing I am certain, we must have a new Home, for this house is not fit for habitation, and it is not nearly large enough. Even after my recent return from living in the tiny homes of the people which one would fancy to be far less comfortable, this is forcibly impressed upon me. We simply cannot go on refusing to take in children who need its shelter so badly. So please spread this broadcast among the friends in England. This Home has been enlarged once since it was built, and yet it is not nearly big enough for our present needs. We have no nursery, and I only wish you could see the tiny room which has to do duty for a sewing-room. It is certainly only called "room" by courtesy, for there is scarcely space to sit down, much less to use a needle without risk of injury to one's neighbour. The weekly mend alone, without the making of new things,

means now between two and three hundred garments in addition to the boots, which the boys repair. As you can imagine, this is no light task and we are often driven almost distracted. I think the stockings are the worst, sometimes a hundred pairs to face at once! I fear we must once have been led into making some rather pointed remarks on this subject, for later, on going into the sewing-room, we found a slip of printed paper, cut from a magazine, and bearing the title of an article: "DON'T SCOLD THE CHILDREN WHEN THEY TEAR THEIR STOCKINGS."

This building rocks like a ship at sea; the roof continually leaks, the windows are always "coming abroad," and the panes drop out at "scattered times," while even when shut, the wind whistles through as if to show his utter disdain of our inhospitable and paltry efforts to keep him outside. On stormy nights, in spite of closed windows, the rooms resemble huge snowdrifts. Seven maids with seven mops sweeping for half

a year could never get it clear. The building heaves so much with the frost that the doors constantly refuse to work, because the floors have risen, and if they are planed, when the frost disappears, a yawning chasm confronts you. Our storeroom is so cold in winter that we put on Arctic furs to fetch in the food, and in summer it is flooded so that we swim from barrel to barrel as Alice floated in her pool of tears. But far above all these minor discomforts is the one overwhelming desire not to have to refuse "one of these little ones."

One's heart aches when one remembers all the money and effort and love expended on a single child at home, that he may lack nothing to be prepared in body and spirit to meet the vicissitudes of his coming life journey. But in this land are hundreds of children, our own blood and kin, who must face their crushing problems often with bodies stunted from insufficient nourishment in childhood, and minds unopened and

undeveloped, not through lack of natural ability, but because opportunity has never come to them. As one looks ahead one sees clearly what a contribution these eager children could offer their "day" if only their cousins at home had "the eyes of their understanding purged to behold things invisible and unseen."

March 10

THE seals are in! That to you doubtless does not seem the most engrossing item of news that could be communicated, but that merely proves what a long road you have to travel. Before the break of day every man capable of carrying a weapon is out on the ice to try and get his share of the spoils.

They carry every conceivable sort of gun, but the six-foot muzzle-loaders are the favourites. These ancient weapons have been handed down from father to son for generations, and locally go by the somewhat misleading soubriquet of the "little darlints."

The people call the seals "swiles." There is an old story about a foreigner who once asked, "How do you spell 'swile'?" The answer the fisherman gave him was, "We don't spell [carry] 'em. We mostly hauls 'em."

Sea-birds have also come in the "swatches"

of open water between the pans. A gale of wind and sea has broken up the ice, and driven it out of St. Mien's Bay, which is just round the corner from us. Thousands of "turr" are there, and the men are reaping many a banquet. A man's wealth is now gauged by the number of birds which are strung around the eaves of his house. It is a safe spot, for it keeps the birds thoroughly frozen, and well out of reach, at this time of year, of the ever-present dog.

Some of the men were prevented from being on the spot for bird shooting as promptly as they desired by the fact that their boats, having lain up all winter, were not "plymmed." If you put a dried apple, for instance, into water it "plymms"; so do beans, and so do boats. When a boat is not "plymmed," it leaks in all its seams, and is therefore looked upon as unsafe for these sub-Arctic waters by the more conservative amongst us. To stop a boat leaking you "chinch" the seams with oakum. Our fish-

erman sexton has just told me that "the church was right chinched last night."

One by one our supplies are giving out or diminishing. Each week as I send down an order to the store it is returned with some item crossed off. These articles at home would be considered the indispensables. Already potatoes have gone the way of all flesh; there is no more butter (though that is less loss than it sounds, for it was packed on the schooner directly next the kerosene barrels, and a liberal quantity of that volatile liquid incorporated itself in each tub of "oleo"). We are warned that the remaining amount of flour will not hold out till the spring boat — our first possible chance of getting reinforcements for our larder — unless we exercise the watchfulness of the Sphinx. The year before I came the first boat did not reach St. Antoine till the 28th of June.

More excitement has just been communicated to me by Topsy: much more. A man from the

Baie des Français has killed a huge polar bear. It took ten men and six dogs to haul the beast home after he had been finally dispatched. The man fired several shots at him, but did not hit a

vital spot. One bullet only remained to him, and the bear was coming at him in a very purposeful manner. "Now or never," thought the fisherman, and fired. The creature fell dead almost at his feet. When they skinned him they found bullets in his legs and flank, but searched and searched in vain for the fatal one which had been

the end of him. There was no mark on the skin in any vital spot. At last they found it. The ball had penetrated exactly through the bear's ear into his brain. All the countryside is now dining off bear steak; and there is a splendid skin to be purchased if you are so minded. I have eaten a bit of the steak, though I confess I did not sit down to the feast with any pleasurable anticipation, as the men said that they found the remains of a recently devoured seal in Bruin's "tum." I had an agreeable surprise. The meat was fibrous and a little tough, but it was quite good — a vast improvement on the sea-birds which are so highly valued in the local commissariat.

The Prophet has a vivid idea of the processes going on in the heads of animals. He says that up to fifteen years ago there were bears innumerable "in the country." "And one day, miss," he explained, "the whole crew of them gets their anchors and leaves in a body." To hear him one would imagine that at a concerted signal

the bears came out of their burrows and shook the dust of the land from their feet.

The Eskimos toll the seals. They lie on the ice and wave their legs in the air, and the seals, curious animals, approach to discover the nature of the phenomenon, and are forthwith dispatched. One Eskimo of a histrionic temperament decided to "go one better." He went out to the ice edge, climbed into his sealskin sleeping-bag, and waved his legs, as per stage directions. We are not informed whether the device would have proved a successful decoy to the seals, for before any had been lured within range, another Innuit, having seen the sealskin legs gesticulating on the ice edge, naturally mistook them for the real thing, fired with regrettable accuracy, and went out to find a dead cousin.

The story is the only deterrent I have from dressing in my white Russian hareskin coat, and sitting in the graveyard some dusky evening. The people claim that the place is haunted. I

have never met a "Yoho" and never expect to, but I would dearly love to see how others act when they think they have. Only the suspicion that they would "plump for safety," and fire the inevitable muzzle-loader at my white garment, keeps me from making the experiment *in corpore vile.*

The birds and the seals and the bears and white foxes coming south on the moving ice are signs of spring. There is a stir in the air as if the people as well sensed that the back of the long winter was broken. How it has flown! You cannot fancy my sensations of lonesomeness when I think that I shall never spend another in this country. You cannot describe or analyze the lure of the land and its people, but it is there, and grips you. I have grown to love it, and you will welcome home an uncomplimentary homesick comrade when September comes.

April 1

LAST minute of Sunday, so here's to you. Tomorrow I shall be cheerfully immersed up to the eyes in work.

Oh! this Home. How little it deserves the name! Our English storms are nothing but babies compared with the appalling blasts which sweep down upon us from the north. In summer the furious seas dash against the cliffs as if to protect them from the desecration of human encroachment. The fine snow filters in between the roof and ceiling of this building, and in a "mild," such as we are now experiencing, it melts, and endless little rivulets trickle down in nearly every room. The water comes in on my bed, on the kitchen range, and on the dining-room table. It falls on the sewing-machine in one room, on the piano and bookcase in another. Its catholicity of taste is plain disheartening!

You ask whether these kiddies have the stuff

in them to repay what you are pleased to term "such an outlay of effort." My emphatic "yes" should have been so insistent as to have reached you by telepathy when the doubt first presented itself. The Home has been established now long enough to have some of its "graduates" go out into life; and the splendid manhood and womanhood of these young people are at once a sufficient reward to us and a silencing response to you. Many of them have been sent to the States and Canada for further education, and are now not only writing a successful story for themselves, but helping their less fortunate neighbours, in a way we from outside never can, to turn over many a new leaf in their books.

Yesterday I attended the theatre, only it was the operating theatre. The patient on this occasion was a doll, the surgeon a lad of seven, himself a victim of infantile paralysis, and the head nurse assisting was aged nine, and wears a brace on each leg. The stage was the children's

ward of the hospital. Here are several pathetic little people, orthopedic cases, brought in for treatment during the winter, and who must stay till the spring boat arrives, as their homes are now cut off by interminable miles of snow wastes and icy sea. Nothing escapes their notice. They tear up their Christmas picture books, and when charged with the enormity of their offence, explain that they "must have adhesive tape for their operative work." Dick, the surgeon, was overheard the other day telling Margaret, the head nurse, as together they amputated the legs of her doll, "This is the way Sir Robert Jones does it."

Next to operating, the children love music; and they love it with a repertoire varied to meet every mood, from "Keep the Home Fires Burning" to "In the Courts of Belshazzar and a Hundred of his Lords." One three-year-old scrap comes from a Salvation Army household, and listens to all such melodies with marked disap-

proval. But when the others finish, she "pipes up," shutting her eyes, clapping her hands and swaying back and forth —

> "Baby 's left the cradle for the Golden Shore:
> Now he floats, now he floats,
> Happy as before."

Three of the kiddies are Roman Catholics and have taught their companions to say their prayers properly of an evening. They all cross themselves devoutly at the close; but this instruction has fallen on fallow ground in the wee three-year-old. She sits with eyes tightly screwed together lest she be forced even to witness such heresy and schism.

Yesterday I was walking with Gabriel when we came upon a tiny bird essaying his first spring song on a tree-top near by. Gabriel looked at the newcomer silently for several minutes, and finally, turning his luminous brown eyes up to my face, asked, "Do he sing hymns, Teacher?"

April 19

THE village sale was held last week. This has become an annual occurrence, and the proceeds are devoted to varying good objects. This time the hospital was the beneficiary. For months the countryside, men and women, have been making articles, and I can assure you it is a relief to have it over and such a success to boot, and life's quiet tone restored. We made large numbers of purchases, and consumed unbelievable quantities of more than solid nourishment. The people have shown the greatest ingenuity and diligence, and the display was a credit to their talent. I was particularly struck with the really clever carving representing local scenes which the fishermen had done with no other tools than their jack-knives. The auction was the keynote of the evening, due largely to the signal ability of the auctioneer. His methods are effective, but strictly his own. Cakes, made generally in graded layers and

liberally coated with different coloured sugar, were the favourites. As he held up the last teetering mountain he "bawled": "What am I bid for this wonderful cake? 'T is a bargain at any price. Why, she 's so heavy I can't hold her with one hand." It fetched seven dollars!

The yearly meet for sports was held in the afternoon before the sale, and was voted by all to be a great success. It is a far cry from the days when games were introduced here by the Mission. Then the people's lives were so drab, and they had little idea of the sporting qualities which every Englishman values so highly. In those early days if in a game of football one side kicked a goal, they had to wait till the other had done the same before the game could proceed, or the play would have been turned into a battle. Now everything in trousers in the place can be seen of an evening out on the harbour ice kicking a ball about. The harbour is our very roomy athletic field.

Twenty-two teams had entered for the dog race, and the start, when the whole number were ranged up in the line, was pandemonium unloosed. The dogs were barking out threatenings and slaughter to the teams next them, their masters were shouting unheeded words of command, the crowd were cheering their favourites, and altogether you would never have guessed from the racket and confusion that you were north of the Roaring Forties.

The last event on the sports programme was a scramble for coloured candies by all the children of the village. Our flock from the Home participated. The proceeding was as unhygienic as it was alluring, and our surprise was great when a universally healthy household greeted the morrow morn.

When I heard the amount the poor folk had raised for charity out of their meagre pittance, I felt reproached. It is a consistent fact here that the people give and do more than their means

justify, and it must involve a hard pinch for them in some other quarter.

Coming from the sale at ten at night I looked for our "Yoho" in passing the churchyard, but was unrewarded, though some of the harbour people assured me in the morning that they had seen it plainly. Can there be anything in the current belief that the men of the sea are more psychic than we case-hardened products of civilization, or is it merely superstition? There is a story here of a man called Gaulton, which is vouched for by all the older men who can recall the incident. It seems that in Savage Cove this old George Gaulton lived till he was ninety. He died on December 4, 1883. On the 16th he appeared in the flesh to a former acquaintance at Port au Choix, fifty miles from the spot at which he had died. This man Shenicks gives the following account of the curious visitation:

"I was in the woods cutting timber for a day and a half. During the whole of that time I was

sure I heard footsteps near me in the snow, although I could see nothing. On the evening of the second day, in consequence of heavy rain, I returned home early. I knew my cattle had plenty of food, but something forced me to go to the hay-pook. While there, in a few moments I stood face to face with old George Gaulton. I was not frightened. We stood in the rain and talked for some time. In the course of the conversation the old man gave me a message for his eldest son, and begged me to deliver it to him myself before the end of March. Immediately afterwards he disappeared, and then I was terribly afraid."

A few weeks later Shenicks went all the way to Savage Cove and delivered the message given to him in so strange a fashion.

A word of apology and I close. In an early letter to you I recall judging harshly a concoction called "brewis." Experience here has taught me that our own delicacies meet with a similar

fate at the hands of my present fellow countrymen. I offered Carmen on her arrival a cup of cocoa for Sunday supper. After one sniff, biddable and polite child though she was, I saw her surreptitiously pour the "hemlock cup" out of the open window behind her.

May 23

MANY miles over the hills from St. Antoine lies one of the wildest and most beautiful harbours on this coast. Nestling within magnificently high rocks, the picturesque colouring of which is reflected in the quiet water beneath, lies the little village of Crémaillière. It is only a small settlement of tiny cottages beside the edge of the sea, but it has the unenviable reputation of being the worst village on the coast. In winter only three families live there, but in the summertime a number of men come for the fishing, and they with their wives and children exist in almost indescribable hovels. Some of these huts are just rough board affairs, about six feet by ten, and resemble cow sheds more than houses. If there is a window at all, it is merely a small square of glass (not made to open) high up on one side of the wall. In some there is not even the pretence of a window, but in cases of severe

sickness a hole is knocked through for ventilation on hearing of the near approach of the Mission doctor. The walls have only one thickness of board with no lining and the roofs are thatched with sods. There is no flooring whatever. Not one person in Crémaillière can either read or write.

Yesterday there was a funeral held in one of the little villages, and the mingling of pathos and humour made one realize more vividly than ever how "all the world's akin." A young mother had died who could have been saved if her folk had realized the danger in time and sent for the doctor. She was lying in a rude board coffin in the bare kitchen. As space was at a premium the casket had been placed on the top of the long box which serves as a residence for the family rooster and chickens. They kept popping their heads, with their round, quick eyes out through the slats, and emitting startled crows and clucks at the visitors. The young woman was dressed

in all her outdoor clothing; a cherished lace curtain sought to hide the rough, unplaned boards of the coffin — for it had been hewn from the forest the day before. The depth of her husband's grief was evidenced by the fact that he had spent his last and only two dollars in the purchase, at the Nameless Cove general store, of the highly flowered hat which surmounted his wife's young careworn but peaceful face as she lay at rest.

I saw for the first time an old custom preserved on the coast. Before the coffin was closed all the family passed by the head of the deceased and kissed the face of their loved one for the last time, while all the visitors followed and laid their hands reverently on the forehead. Only when the master of ceremonies, who is always specially appointed, had cried out in a sonorous voice, "Any more?" and met with no response, was the ceremony of closing the lid permitted.

Surely the children are the one and only hope of this country. Through them we may trust to

raise the moral standard of the generations to come, but it is going to be a very slow process to make any headway against the ignorance and absence of desire for better things which prevails so largely here.

I must tell you of the latest addition to our family. On the first boat in the spring there arrived a family, brought by neighbours, to say what the Mission could do for them. I think I have never seen a more forlorn sight than this group presented when they stepped from the steamer. There was the father (the mother is dead), an elderly half-witted cripple capable neither of caring for himself nor for his children, four boys of varying sizes, and a girl of fourteen in the last stages of tuberculosis. The family were nearly frozen, half-starved, and completely dazed at the hopelessness of their situation. The girl was admitted to the hospital, where she has since died, and the youngest boy, Israel, we took into the Home. Alas, we had only room for the

one. Israel was at first much overawed by the standard of cleanliness required in this institution, and protested vigorously when we tried to put him into the bathtub. He explained to us that he never washed more than his face and hands at home, not even his neck and ears, the limitation of territory being strictly defined and scrupulously observed.

June 20

UNLIKE last year this summer promises to be hot, at least for this country. I have felt one great lack this year. You have to pass the long months of what would be lovely spring in England without a sign of a living blade of flower, though a few little songbirds did their best bravely to make it up to us. Already we are being driven almost crazy with the mosquitoes and black flies, songsters of no mean calibre, especially at night. In desperation our little ones yesterday succeeded in killing an unusually large specimen, and after burying it with great solemnity were heard singing around the grave in no uncheerful tones, "Nearer, my God, to Thee."

I hate to think that these next few weeks will be the last I shall spend in this country and with these children. The North seems to weave over one a kind of spell and fascination all its own. I look back sometimes and smile that I should

ever have felt the year long or dreary; it has passed so quickly that I can scarcely believe it already time to be thinking of you and England again. I may emulate the example of Mrs. Lot, but with the certainty that a similar fate to hers does not await me.

I have just unpacked a barrel of clothing sent from home to the Orphanage, and find to my disgust that it is almost entirely composed of muslin blouses and old ladies' bonnets! What am I to do with them? The blouses I can use as mosquito veiling, but these bonnets are not the kind our babies wear. I shall present one to Topsy, who will look adorable in it.

You hint it is hard to get up interest in Labrador because we are neither heathen nor black. I can imagine your sewing circle of dear old ladies (perhaps they sent the bonnets) discussing the relative merits of working to send aeroplanes to the Arabs, bicycles to the Bedouins, comforters to the Chinese, jumpers to the Jap-

anese, handkerchiefs to the Hottentots, hair nets to the Hindoos, mouth organs to the Mohammedans, pinafores to the Parsees, pyjamas to the Papuans, prayer-books to the Pigmies, sandwiches to the South Sea Islanders, or zithers to the Zulus. Just wait till I can talk to your dear old ladies!

A few days ago we had a very narrow escape from fire; indeed, it seemed for some time as if the whole of the Mission would be wiped out. It was a half-holiday and our boys had gone fishing to the Devil's Pond, a favourite spot of theirs, about a mile away. Unfortunately Noah was seized with the idea of lighting a fire by which to cook the trout, the matches having been stolen from my room. It had been dry for several days, there was quite a wind, and the fire, catching the furze, quickly got beyond the one required for culinary purposes. The boys first tried to smother it with their coats, but finding that of no avail ran home to give the

alarm. By the time the men could get to the spot the fire had spread so rapidly that attention had to be turned towards trying to save the houses. The doctor's house was the one most directly threatened at first, and we proceeded to strip it of all furniture, carrying everything to the foreshore to be ready to be taken off if necessary. The doctor was away on a medical call, and you can imagine my feelings when I expected every moment to see the Northern Light come round the point, the doctor's house in flames and his household gods scattered to the winds! Then we dismantled this place — the children having been sent at the outset to a place of safety — and removed the patients from the hospital. Every man in the place was hard at work, and there were few of us who dared to hope that we should have a roof over our heads that night. Happily the wind suddenly dropped, the fire died down, and late that night we were able to return and endeavour to sort out babies and

furniture. The goddess of disorder reigned supreme, and it was only after many weary hours that we were able to find beds for the babies and babies for the beds. And it was our boys who started the fire! I am covered with confusion every second when I stop to think of it, and wonder if this is not the psychological moment to make my exit from this Mission.

July 11

By invitation of the doctor I am off for a trip on the Northern Light next week. He offers me thus the chance to see other portions of the Shore before he drops me at the Iron Bound Islands, where I can connect with the southern-going coastal steamer. The Prophet has encouraged me with the observation that "nearly all the female ladies what comes aboard her do be wonderful sick," but I am not to be deterred. So:

"Now, Brothers, for the icebergs of frozen Labrador,
Floating spectral in the moonshine along the low, black shore.
Where in the mist the rock is hiding, and the sharp reef lurks below;
And the white squall smites in summer, and the autumn tempests blow."

This is a mere scrap of a greeting, for the day of departure is so near that I feel I want to spend every minute with the kiddies. I count on your forbearance, and your knowledge that though my pen is quiet, my heart still holds you without rival.

On board the Northern Light
July 16

Is to-day as lovely in your part of the world as it is in mine, and do you greet it with a background of as exciting a night as the one that has just passed over us? I wonder. I came across some old forms of bills of lading sent out to this country from England. They always closed with this most appropriate expression, "And so God send the good ship to her desired port in safety." It has fallen into disuse long ago, but about break of early day the idea took a very compelling shape in my mind. We put out from Bonne Espérance just as night was falling, and there was no moon to aid us. The doctor had decided on the outside run, and brief as is my acquaintance with the "lonely Labrador," I knew what that meant. I therefore betook myself betimes to bed as the best spot for an unseasoned mariner. Twelve o'clock found us barely holding our own

against a furious head wind and sea — "An awful night for a sinner," as our cheery Prophet remarked as he lurched past my cabin door. Icebergs were dotted about. Great combers were pouring over our bow and the floods came sweeping down the decks sounding like the roar of a thousand cataracts.

The only way one could keep from being hurled out of one's berth was to cling like a leech to a rope fastened to a ring in the wall, for the little ship was bouncing back and forth so fast and so far that it was impossible to compare it with the motion of any other craft. Day began to dawn about 3 A.M. By the dim light I could make out mighty mountains of green foaming water. At each roll of the steamer we seemed to be at the bottom of a huge emerald pit. Suddenly some one yelled, "There she goes!" and that second the boat was dragged down, down, down. An immense wave had caught us, rolled us so far over that our dory in

davits had filled with water to the brim. As the ship righted herself, the weight of the dory snapped off the davit at the deck, and the boat, still attached by her painter, was dragged underneath our hull, and threatened to pull us down with it. In two seconds the men had cut her away, but not before she had nearly banged herself to matchwood against our side.

Now we are lying under the lea of St. Augustine Island waiting for the wind to abate. The chief engineer has just offered to row me ashore to hunt for young puffins. More later.

There were hundreds of them in every family, and so many families that it resembled

nothing so much as a puffin ghetto. I judged from the turmoil that they were screeching for "a place in the sun." The noise they made did

not in the least accord with their respectable Quaker appearance. Shall I bring you one as a pet? Its austere presence would help you to remember your "latter end."

When I wrote you that there was ice about, I did not refer to the field ice through which we travelled on my way north. This is the real thing this time — icebergs, and lots of them. They call the little ones "growlers," and big and little alike are classed as "pieces of ice"! They are not my idea of a "piece" of anything. I know now what the Ancient Mariner meant when he said:

> "And ice mast high came floating by
> As green as emerald."

It exactly describes them, only it does n't wholly describe them, for no one could. They loom up in every shape and size and variation of form, pinnacles and towers and battlements, stately palaces of glittering crystal, triumphal archways more gorgeous than ever welcomed a con-

queror home. Sometimes they are shining white, too dazzling to look at; and sometimes they are streaked with great vivid bands of green and azure which are so unearthly and brilliant that I feel certain some fairy has dipped his brush in the solar spectrum and dabbed the colours on this gigantic palette.

A sea without these jewels of the Arctic will forever look barren and unfinished to me after this. Even the sailors, who know too well what a menace they are to their craft, yield to their beauty a mute and grudging homage. To sit in the sun or the moonlight, and watch a heavy sea hurling mountains of water and foam over one of these ocean monarchs is a never-to-be-forgotten experience. So too it is to listen to the thunder of one of them "foundering"; for their equilibrium is very unstable, and the action of the sea, as they travel southwards to their death in the Gulf Stream, cuts them away at the surface of the water. Blocks weighing unbelievable

tons crash off them, or they will suddenly, without a second's warning, break into a million pieces. I can never conquer a creepiness of the spine as I listen to one of these tragedies. It is a startling, new sensation such as we never expect to meet again after childhood has shut its doors on us. In the quiet that follows the gigantic disintegration one half expects to see a new heaven and a new earth emerge out of the chaos of ice quivering in the water.

You often warned me in the course of the past year how dull life would be. You knew how I loved a city. I still do. But the last word on earth one could apply to the life here is "dull." Nature takes care of that. I defy you to walk along any street in London and see six porpoises and a whale! That is what I saw this morning. Oh! of course you may counter by telling me that neither can I see an automobile or a fire engine, but I have you, because I can answer that I have seen them already. How are you going to

get out of that corner, except by saying that you do not want to see the old porpoises and whales and bergs? — and I know your "Scotch" conscience forbids such distortion of facts.

I have come to believe in the personality of porpoises. They swam beside the ship, playing about in the water all the while, rolling over and diving, and chasing each other just as if they knew they had a "gallery." We did not reward them very well either, for the Prophet shot one, and we ate bits of him for lunch — the porpoise, I mean, not the Prophet. I thought he would make a good companion-piece for the polar bear, and he was quite edible. He only needed a rasher of bacon to make you believe he was calf's liver.

So you see that between puffins and porpoises and whales, and "growlers" and lost dories, I crowded enough into one day to give me dreams that Alice in Wonderland might covet.

In your secret heart don't you wish that you too were

"Where the squat-legged Eskimo
Waddles in the ice and snow,
And the playful polar bear
Nips the hunter unaware;
Where the air is kind o' pure,
And the snow crop 's pretty sure" ?

July 22

It has been days since I wrote you, and they have slipped by so stealthily I must have missed half they held.

Since coming aboard I have taken to rising promptly. It is a necessary measure if I am to be able to rise at all. One morning I stuck my head out just in time to see my favourite sweater, which I had counted on for service on the homeward voyage, disappearing over the rail — legitimately, so far as concerned the wearer. Last week, by the merest fluke, I rescued my best boots from a similar fate. The doctor explained lamely on each occasion that they got mixed with the clothing sent for distribution to the poor. This may be a literal statement of fact, but I doubt the manner of the mixing.

We celebrated to-day by running aground on the flats. You can "squeak" over them if you happen to strike the channel. The difficulty is,

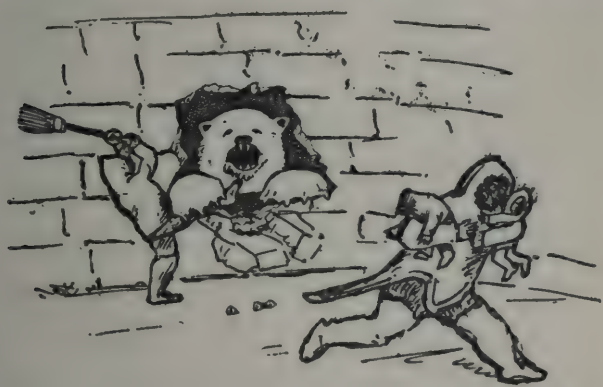
however, that the sandy bottom shifts. To-day it is, and to-morrow it is not. I was eating one of those large, hearty breakfasts which the combination of a dead flat calm and a sunshiny brisk air make such a desideratum. I was, moreover, perched on the top of the wheel house, and reflecting on the poor taste of the author of the Book of Revelation when he said that in heaven "there shall be no more sea." At this moment I came to with a lurch. "She's stuck!" yelled, or as he himself would put it, "bawled," the Prophet. For once he was undeniably right. Fortunately the tide was on the flood, and we floated off a short while after.

In the afternoon we visited an Eskimo Moravian station. They — the Eskimos, not the Moravians — are a jolly little people, and picturesque as possible. Not that any aspersions on the Moravians are intended, for I have the greatest respect for them. My shining leather coat made a great hit. They fondled it and

stroked it, and coo-ed at it as if it were a new baby. All the women past their very first youth seemed toothless. I wondered if it could be a characteristic of the tribe — sort of Manx Eskimo. I asked the Prophet what was the cause of the universal shortage, and was told that the Eskimo women all chew the sealskin to soften it for making into boots. You can take this statement for what it may be worth.

Speaking of which I have just finished reading a ludicrously furious attack on the Mission in a St. John's paper, for its alleged misrepresentations. It seems that last year the former superintendent took down a boy from the Children's Home to give him a chance at further education. He had a wooden leg, his own having been removed by an operation for tuberculosis. On his arrival in Montreal the omnivorous reporter saw in him excellent copy, and forthwith printed the following purely fictitious account of the cause of his disability. Little Kommak, so the story

ran (the boy is of pure Irish extraction, and is named Michael Flynn), was one day sitting with his mother in his igloo when he saw a large polar bear approaching. Having no weapon, and not desiring the presence of the bear in any capacity at their midday meal, he stuck his leg out through the small aperture of the igloo. The bear



bit it off on the principle of half a loaf being better than no bread. The whole thing was a fabric of lies from beginning to end. The St. John's papers discovered the article, pounced upon it, and printed the article "*que je viens de finir.*" Of

course, if the local editor lacked humour enough to credit the doctor with such a fairy tale, one could pity the poor soul, but his diatribe has rather the earmarks of jealousy.

A lovely sunset is lighting up the sea and sky and hills, and turning the plain little settlement, in the harbour of which we are anchored, into the Never, Never Land. The scene is so bewitching that I find my soul purged by it of the bad taste of the attack. I'll leave you to digest the mixed metaphor undisturbed while I go below and help with the patients who have begun pouring aboard.

Same evening

An old chap has just climbed over the rail, who looks like an early patriarch, but his dignity is impaired by the moth-eaten high silk hat which surmounts his white hair. The people regard him with apparent deference, due either to the hat or his inherent character. Looking at his

fine old face, one is inclined to believe it is the latter.

The expressions these people use are so nautical and so apt! Every patient who comes aboard expressed the wish to be "sounded" in some portion of his or her anatomy for the suspected ailment which has brought him. One burly fisherman solemnly took off his huge oily sea-boot, placed a grimy forefinger on his heel, and remarked sententiously that the doctor "must sound him right there." The prescription was soap and water — a diagnosis in which I entirely concurred. The next case was a young girl with a "kink in her glutch." It has the sound of all too familiar motor trouble, but was dismissed as psychopathic. I wish that a similarly simple diagnosis accounted for the mysterious ailments of automobiles. My meditations on modern science were interrupted by an insistent voice proclaiming that "my head is like to burst abroad."

If I were a woman on this coast my temper

would "burst abroad" to see the men — some of them — spitting all over the floors of the cottages: disgusting and particularly dangerous in a country where the arch-enemy, tuberculosis, is ever on the watch for victims. But the new era is slowly dawning. Now, instead of hooking "Welcome Home" into the fireside mat, you find "DONT SPIT" worked in letters of flame. It is the harbinger of the feminist movement in the land.

Speaking of the feminist movement makes me think of a woman at Aquaforte Harbour. She deserves a book written about her. In the first place, Elmira had the courage of her convictions, and did not marry. Her convictions were that marriage was desirable if you get the right man who can support you properly, and not otherwise. This is generations in advance of the local attitude to the holy estate. She has lived a life of single blessedness to the coast. In every trouble along her section of the shore it is "rou-

tine" to send for "Aunt" 'Mira. She has more sense and unselfishness and native wit than you would meet in ten products of civilization. For a year she acted as nurse to the little boy of one of the staff, and never was child better cared for. They once told 'Mira she really must make baby take his bottle. (He had the habit of profound slumber at that time.) "Oh! I does, ma'm," 'Mira replied. "If he dwalls off, I gives him a scattered jolt." The family took her to England with them, and her remarks on the trains showed where her ancestry lay. When they backed she exclaimed, "My happy day! We're goin' astern!" She requested to be allowed to "open the port"; and at a certain junction where there was a long delay she asked to go "ashore for a spell."

That "hell is paved with good intentions" is no longer a glib phrase to me; it is a conviction born of seeing some of the suffering of this country. The doctor has just been ashore to see

a woman with a five-days old baby. No attempt whatever had been made to get her or her bed clean or comfortable. She had developed a violent fever, and the local midwives, with their congenital terror of the use of water — internal or external — had larded the miserable creature over from head to foot with butter, and finished off with a liberal coating of oakum. The doctor said, by the time he had himself scraped and bathed her, put her in a fresh cool bed with a jug of spring water beside her to drink, she looked as if she thought the gates of Paradise had opened.

Mails reached us at the Moravian station, and your most welcome letters loomed large on the postal horizon. You ask if I have not found the year long. I will answer by telling you the accepted derivation of the name "Labrador." It comes from the Portuguese, and means "the labourer," because those early voyagers intended to send slaves back to His Majesty.

Well-filled time, so the psychologists tell us, is short in passing, and "down North," before you are half into the day's tasks, you look up to find that "the embers of the day are red." You must have guessed, too, that I should not have evinced such contentment during these months if my fellow workers had not been congenial. I shall always remember their devotion, and readiness to serve both one another and the people; and I know that the years to come will only deepen my appreciation of what their friendship has meant to me.

How glad I was when the winter came, and I was no longer classed as a newcomer! I had heard so much about dog driving that I remember thinking the resultant sensations must be akin to those Elijah experienced in his chariot. But now I have driven with dogs in summer, and that is more than most of the older stagers can boast. In a prosperous little village in the Straits lives the rural dean. He is a devoted and

practical example of what a shepherd and bishop of souls can be. There is not a good work for the benefit of his flock — and he is not bound by the conventional and unchristian denominational prejudices — which does not find in him a leader. His interests range from coöperation to a skin-boot industry. But the problem of getting about when you have no Aladdin's carpet is acute. He goes by dog sled and shanks' pony in winter, and used to go by boat and shanks' pony in summer. Then one day he had the inspiration of building a two-wheeled shay, and harnessing in his lusty and idle dog team. Now he drives about at a rate that "Jehu the son of Nimshi would approve," and is independent of winds and weather.

Sunday to-morrow. We are running south for the Ragged Islands. If I were not on the hospital ship, and therefore an involuntary example to the people, I would fall into my bunk at night with my clothes on, I am so weary.

Ragged Islands
Sunday night

JUST aboard again after Prayers at the little church. It is a quaint and crude little edifice, and the people were so kindly and the service so hearty that one feels "wonderfu' lifted up." To be sure, during the sermon I was suddenly brought up "all standing" by the amazing statement that the "Harch Hangels go Hup, Hup, Hup." One felt in one's bones that this was a misapprehension. The very earnest clergyman may have noticed my obvious disagreement, for at the close he announced, "We will now sing the 398th hymn" —

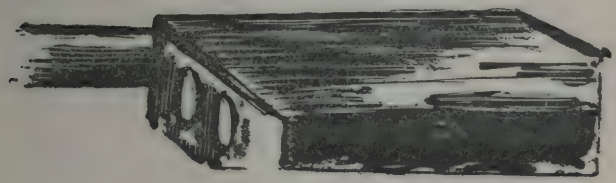
> "Day of Wrath, oh! Day of Mourning,
> See fulfilled the Prophet's warning,
> Heaven and earth in ashes burning."

This goes off into the blue on the chance of its reaching you before I come myself and share a secret with you; for to-morrow we are due at

the Iron Bound Islands, and there I leave the Northern Light, and end the chapter of my life as a member of the Mission staff. The appropriateness of the closing hymn in the little church last night is borne more than ever forcibly in upon me with the chill light of early morning, for I verily feel as though my world were tottering about my ears.

I am still optimist enough to know that life will hold many experiences which will enrich it, but in my secret heart I cherish the conviction that this year will always stand out as a keynote, and a touchstone by which to judge those which succeed it. My greatest solace in the ache which I feel in taking so long a farewell of a people and country that I love is that I shall always possess them in memory — a treasure which no one can take from me. As I look back over the quickly speeding year I find that I have forgotten those trivial incidents of discomfort which pricked my hurrying feet. All I can recall is the

rugged beauty of the land, the brave and simple people with their hardy manhood and more than generous hospitality, and most of all my little bairns who hold in their tiny hands the future of Le Petit Nord.



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